

The Sufi Schools



Mausoleum of Hazrat Khaja
Moinuddin Chisti

Translated by
Mohammed Abdul Hafeez, B.Com.
Translator '*Muslim Saints and Mystics*'
(The Tadhkirah al-Awliya of Farid Eldin Attar
Hyderabad, India)



Preface

In this book, 'Dabistan Sofia, by Zahoor-UL-Hasan-Sharib, in the Urdu language, 14 episodes were added. This book is well known, and it is a famous book. In it, there are 9 episodes from Muslim Saints and Mystics by Farid Eldin Attar and 5 episodes are added from other Urdu books. This book's English title is given as '**The Sufi schools'**

For the above 14 Urdu episodes, I have added my 7 English episodes translated by me (Mohammed Abdul Hafeez) and also added 7 English episodes translated by A.J. Arberry in this English edition of this book. At the end of each and every episode, there is the name of the English translator.

The above episodes are well known in the area of Islamic countries, and some episodes that are not yet known to the general and special persons are added in this book, which is available in a very interesting style, so, for this reason, the readers will find great interest and attention in this matter.

Due to the above facts and details, if the readers start reading the first page of the book, they will not stop reading till they reach the last page, as some interesting events, well-known and famous matters are added to this book, as well as details are added of the holy personalities who have passed away from the world many centuries and years ago.

Even though this is a small book, due to its importance, it is so great due to the coverage of many interesting events and positive information, so it is like an ocean of knowledge and information about holy persons who passed away from the world upon doing their great endeavors and many hard tasks for the teaching and propagation of the Islamic religion and the work of Islam, which was done in the non-Arabian area, so this book is a great book, and it will present the ocean of knowledge for the guidance of people towards the right path of Islam.

To write about these great holy persons is not only difficult, but it is also a very hard task, as they were not only great pious personalities of their time in the area of Arabia, but, in brief, they were great holy persons of Allah of their time in Islamic history.

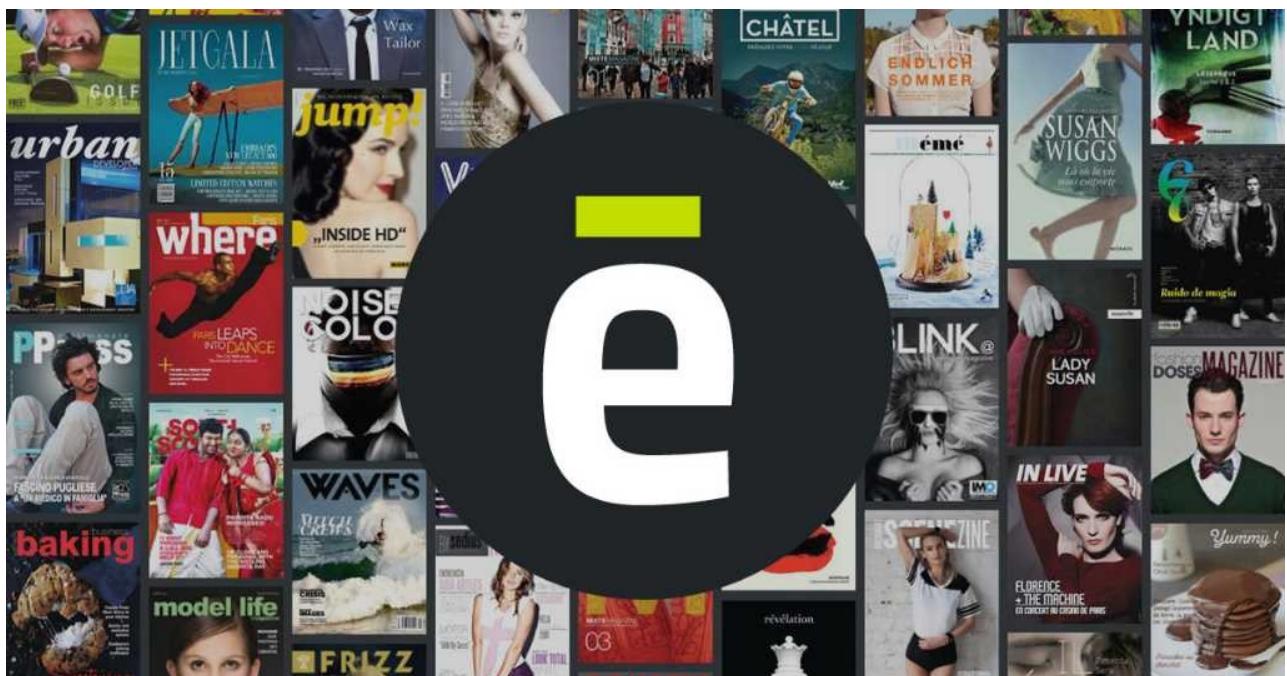
Preface of the English version

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The Urdu version of this book ‘Dabistan Soofia’ was first written and published by Zahur Al-Hasan Sharib in the year May 1993, and the English version of this book is translated and is published by me (Mohammad Abdul Hafeez, Amazon Kindle author) this book in the year December 2024.

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Mohammed Abdul Hafeez (born on January 10, 1945) of Hyderabad, Telangana, is titled as 'IBR Achiever' for translating a complete book titled 'Muslim Saints and Mystics' (ISBN: 978-9830653-54-9), published by ASN Islamic

Books, from English to Kannada using Google translate, as confirmed on August 8, 2024.



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A book for all spiritual seekers

Reviewed in India on 21 June 2020

This is a valuable book with rare and interesting details from the life of the amazing and one of the greatest Sufi Saints Tajuddin Baba, who spent most of his life in Nagpur, in the pre independent India.

I had come across the name of this Saint in the life history of Shirdi Sai Baba written by Master E. Bharadvaja. It is reported there that once Shirdi Baba confused his disciples by mysteriously drumming on a water pot with his satka (a short stick he used to carry with him). He explained his action by saying, that he is extinguishing the fire which caught the hut of Taj uddin Baba in Nagpur. Taj uddin Baba on the other hand refused to accept a wealthy

visitor called Bapu Saheb Buty as his disciple. He asked him to seek his salvation from Shirdi Baba. Both the saints were in communion with each other on the spiritual plane!

Then I was fortunate enough to read the short biography of Tajuddin Baba written by the same author Master Bharadvaja, which impressed me immensely. The drawback of this short although very valuable biography was that facts and details mentioned in it are not complete or not explained in a logical sequence. Which leads to a feeling of dissatisfaction. Still the reader gets an idea of the overwhelming spiritual power and universal love of Taj uddin. But it kindled my interest to know more about this saint.

This made me always to be in search of a complete biography of the saint with more details. As I by chance discovered the Work of Mohammed Abdul Hafeez I was thrilled and I ordered it immediately and am now a happy possessor of this book.

Many important details from the life of this Sufi Saint, which were like missing links, I could gather from this book:

1. About the ancestry of the saint.
2. His childhood and transition from the worldly life to that of godliness; the important incidents which took place and worked as catalysts on the way to his perfection.

3. His relation with the Maharaja of Nagpur and other members of the aristocracy.

4. An exhaustive account of his relationship with the Hindu-disciples and followers.

India is a country of spirituality. Many of its spiritual masters have transcended the narrow limits of religion, preached and practiced universal humanism. It hardly mattered for them to which religion their visitors belonged - they were helped without any discrimination, because only their merit mattered not their cast or creed.

Swami Veerabrahmendra's chief disciple was a Muslim named Sayyed. Shirdi Baba lived in a mosque and was equally worshipped by Muslims and Hindus likewise. Taj uddin Baba was not different in this matter.

As Abdul Hafeez writes in this book about a Hindu-disciple, Venkat Rao, who worked as a Railway guard. People observed him sitting near Tajuddin, although he should have left that place and left Nagpur in a train leaving for Bombay. His job demanded this. But Venkat Rao does not leave that place, because he is completely engrossed in the presence of the Baba. To the surprise of the other people he was also seen at the same time leaving in that train, which left for Bombay!

Western Occultism calls this phenomenon "bilocation" - a miracle shown many times by

Tajuddin Baba on account of his supernatural powers. But the narration of Hafeez leaves one question open: Did the Saint appear in the form of Venkat Rao in the train? Or did he transfer this supernatural power to his disciple so that he could appear at two places at the same time? Spiritual masters are capable of doing both the things.

A very interesting part of this book is that it gives a glimpse into the Muslim or Sufi occultism (see page 81) and tries to explain how miracles happen. This theme requires to be elaborated if the author is planning a second edition.

From the point of view of modern Indian history this book is of immense importance. Yoga and mysticism have been not yet fully recognized driving forces behind the Indian freedom struggle.

The chapter called “Gandhi and Ali Brothers” depicts Gandhis taking the audience of Taj uddin Baba and the Baba making two predictions – one for Gandhi and another one for the Ali Brothers. Both of them turn out to be true! I request the author to elaborate this chapter with more details and photos if possible. That would increase the value of this book hundredfold!

There are certain short comings in regard to the language. English is a foreign language. It

is not always easy to chose the right preposition or the helping verb. In spite of this the reader sees the godly figure of the saint Taj uddin Baba shining behind the linguistic barbed fence of a foreign language.

This is a book to be recommended for all those who are interested in mysticism, universal love which overcomes the narrow limits of religions and for the spiritual seekers.

Dr. Vanamali Gunturu

The Sufi Schools

1. Shaikh Abdul Wahed bin Zaid

Shaikh Abdul Wahid bin Zaid is the leader of the persons of saintliness as well as rightly guided persons. He was the head of the Sufi chain of Zaidan. His father's name is Abdul Wahid. His name is Abdul Fazal.

Education and training: He was a disciple of the Imam Auliya, Hazrat Ali Ibn Taleb. Some have written that he was a student of Imam Hasan. It is also said that he was a student of Imam Azam. It means Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa. He was perfect in Hadith (sayings of the prophet), Fiqah (Islamic jurisprudence), and Tafsir (exegesis of the Quran).

Pledge and caliphate: Upon obtaining the knowledge of manifest, then he paid his attention to the knowledge of the innermost. He went to the presence of Hazrat Hasan Basri. And was entered into his circle of devotion. Upon becoming his disciple, he was given all his wealth and belongings on the way of Allah. Then he was kept away from the world and its matters. With full immersion, he was engaged in the worship of Allah.

Hazrat Hasan Basri blessed him with the saintly dress of the caliphate. Hazrat Kamil bin Zaid also gave him the saintly dress of the caliphate. The saintly dress was received by him by Imam Ali ibn Taleb, who was given to him.

One event: Once he was purchased one slave. He was given an order to him to be present at night in his service. At midnight, he was remembering him. And he was called him. He did not reply to this matter. He began

searching for him in the house. He was not found; the doors were closed.

And there was a lock on the door of the house. There was not a trace of the slave in the house. At last he was sitting there in silence. He thought the slave left the house by some special way.

In the morning time, what he was seen doing was that slave was present in the house. He was given one Dinar to him on which it was written verse Iqlas instead of the royal coin. He told him with much meekness, "Oh, Hazrat, you take from me such dinar daily in this matter." Please excuse me for your night service in this matter.

He has accepted the request of the slave. Now that slave used to vanish in the nighttime and used to give one Dinar to him. This has been happening for a long period of time.

At last there was begun to spread news that a slave was absent from the house for the whole night time. His neighbors lodged a complaint with Hazrat and said to him that the slave is engaged in theft in the nighttime. In such a case there will be no permission given to him to go outside of the house in the nighttime.

He told the people that they should not worry about waiting till the nighttime so that he can find out where the slave is going in the

nighttime, and without taking his examination, it is difficult to say anything is not right in this matter.

The day was over, and nighttime started. Hazrat did not sleep that night. In the midnight hour he was seen; that slave was standing and had made preparations to go outside of the house. He did not try to open the door lock. And from far away, he was given a signal to the lock, and it was opened automatically. And he proceeded outside, and he was given a signal to the lock, and then it was locked closed. The second day he did the same as mentioned above.

So he began following the slave, but the slave did not see him in this matter, and at last he reached the graveyard. And where he was removed his dress and wore the rag dress there. Then he performed the prayer. He was engaged in the worship of Allah till morning time. After performing morning prayer, he stretched his hands, and he requested in the court of Allah. To give him night worship. Then he was seen that upon the request of the slave, one Dinar was fallen near by him by flying in the air. And for which he put a Dinar in his pocket. When he saw that miracle, then he was very surprised in this matter. Now he believed that whatever the people said about him was totally false. Upon seeing the worship and

mystical exercise of the slave, he decided to free him.

In the morning, he was seen as a slave, but he was not found at that place. He left and went toward his house. On the way, he found a horse rider and asked about his city and its distance. And he told him if you run fast, then you will reach in your city in two years time.

Upon hearing this, he said it is difficult to reach his native place. He decided to stay there in the daytime. In the nighttime, that slave will come there, and then he will go back along with him there.

He stayed there the whole day, and in the nighttime, the slave came there at the prescribed time. And he was engaged the whole night in the worship of Allah. In the morning time he was prayed in the same way, and one Dinar came there by falling. He lifted it and put it in his pocket. He was hiding in such a place that a slave could not see him from there.

At that place, a slave came in his service and was given him two Dinars. And he told him, "Oh, Hazrat, take wages for two nights and decide what you have in mind about me in this matter."

When he heard this, he was freed. Upon this slave was happy and was put some pebbles in the edge of the shirts full of his two hands. He

told him, "Oh, Hazrat, you have freed him, so I have presented thanks to you in this matter."

Then he was given a sign to accompany him. And he was reached in the city within a short period of time. When he reached his house, he could not find his slave there. When he opened the edge of the shirt, he found there were not a lot of jewels, but those were very costly jewels.

He was told by the people who had complained about the theft of the slave man that he was done inquiring in this matter. He was not such a person. He was checking his actions and movements. And from his tongue came this sentence as follows suddenly.

"Nabsh noor la nabsh al-aqabur."

What can be said about such an owner and whose slave is as such in this matter? If he is given all worlds, then it will be good. What can be said about that slave and whose owner is as such in this matter? And his name is as such out of pride. And what is my The Arabic word Qutub (قطب) translates to "axis", "pivot", or "pole" in English. It can also be used as an astronomical term or a spiritual symbol:

The effects of his sermon

One day he told that one who spends his riches and belongings on the way of Allah, then Allah

will give him a heavy reward in this matter. That person will be given one palace in heaven. In which they will find beautiful and graceful houris. And those houris are unique in the heaven. and that person can see such houris girls in the world with his eyes.

In his meeting of the sermon, there were found four brothers. Among them, when one of the brothers heard this, there was much effect upon him. He came back to his house immediately and gave all his riches and belongings to the poor and needy fakir persons. That person came back in his presence and told him details of all events. Hazrat paid his kind attention toward him and advised him to recite Isam Azam.

When that person was engaged in recitation of Isam Azam, (In Islam, Ism e Azam is the name of Allah that is considered to be the greatest and is only known to the prophets. It is also known as Ism Allah al-Akbar, which translates to "the Greatest Name of God".) then, as if engaged, he was seen in one beautiful garden. There was one beautiful palace in that garden. In that palace, the most beautiful women were found there. When the women saw him, they told him that there was a coming of the husband of Ain Marzia. That person, when he heard this, asked them who Ain Marzia was among all of you. The women told him that

what you are saying is that we are not equal to the servants of Ain Marzia. If you have a fondness to see Ain Marzia, then go proceed further and he was reached beautiful garden and palace there than which he had seen earlier. In the palace he was seen with the most beautiful women there. Those women, upon seeing him, told this among themselves: "This is the husband of Ain Marzia. Upon hearing that, the person asked among them who Ain Marzia is.? Those women told him that if he wanted to have fondness to see Ain Marzia, then go further. We could not even be similar to the lovers of Ain Marzia.

Upon seeing this, that person went further, and he saw the most beautiful garden and palace that he had ever seen before. In that palace there were sitting the most beautiful women. Upon seeing those women, he was sure that among them there was Ain Marzia. When that person went near them, he asked the same question: Who is Ain Marzia among them.?

Those women told him that they are among the lovers of Ain Marzia. He is the husband of Aim Marzia. If you want to have fondness to see Ain Marzia, then go inside of this palace, and she is inside of it.

Upon hearing he was happy, we went inside of the palace by lifting through curtains. He was seen that she was sitting on a throne decorated with pearls. Upon seeing her grace and beauty, he became her lover and devotee. That person made a slogan and became unconscious. He had become normal after some time. Upon getting her signal, he went near her. And sat before her. He could not control himself, and he went and tried to sit near her. Ain Marzia, told him what is this uneasiness and worry? This will be happiness that there is a short time and not more far for our meeting. What is the time required to pass this short time in this matter?

During this time that person's eyes were opened, and he could not find her. He was very worried and feeling much uneasiness in this matter, and like a slaughtered bird, he began to roll on the earth.

When Hazrat was informed about his action to Hazrat, then he was called in his presence. He asked him what this madness is, so he should leave this action in this matter.

That person began telling him all the details, but he was stopped in this matter during his description, and he told him that you are like, which is said that, but you did not remember

she promised with you, but you are upset for such passing of short time.

Upon his saying he was able to remember the promise of Ain Mirzia, and upon his remembrance, there was found with him satisfaction. He had become silent on the matter.

After some days there was an attack of the enemy on the city. The people of the city fought with the army of the enemy. And that person also fought in the battle bravely, and at last he was martyred on the battlefield.

After the end of the battle, he went out of the city. He searched for the corpse of that person. He was found with light on his face and a smile on his lips. He prayed his funeral prayer there and was buried in the grave.

Upon his burial, he told his events to some special people. When he was checked, the duration of time from this event to his burial time, which is very short.

Death: He had become so ill that he could not stand or sit for this reason due to no strength with him. So for this reason, his servant used to help him sit and stand as well as in ablution. One day there was tight time for the prayer, and his servant was not present there. Hazrat

prayed to Allah in that condition, "Oh Allah, give me such power in this condition that I can do ablution and perform prayer." After this, it will be done as per your will."

His prayer was accepted, and there came a change in his condition. And it was seen that he had become healthy. He stood from bed and did ablution. He performed, prayed, and went back to his bed and slept, and then there began upon him the same condition of ill health.

Death: He left the world in the year 177 Hijri. It is also said that his date of birth is 27th Safar in the year 178 Hijri. And his tomb of light is in Basra, which is visited by the special and general people.

Caliphs: When he was sat on the throne of commandments and guidance, then at that time five persons came in his presence. And were entered in his circle of devotion. And these five persons are among the sons of Abdulla bin Awuf. And these people are called Zaidi.

He gave the saintly dress of the caliphate to these five people.

The saintly dress of the caliphate, which was received by Hazrat Basri, was given by him to

Hazrat Khaja Fazal bin Ayaz. The saintly dress, which was given to him by Khaja Kamil bin Ziad, was given to Hazrat Abu Yakub al-Yusavi. Special feature of the family :These five people who were called Zaidi and did not have relations in the world.They did not use to live in the city and habitations. They used to live in jungle areas and wander in the forest places. And they used to live separate from mankind and engaged in the worship of Allah. They were persons of Quran-Conners. They have obtained knowledge. They used to engage in worship and mystical exercises. And they will always keep fasting. And wake up in the nighttime. They used to break the fast with jungle fruits and grass after three or four days and did not marry. Used to wear rag and rag dresses and cover tag. They did not ask anything from anybody. If anybody will present something to them, then soon they will give to the poor and needy persons.

Character

He was unique in worship and mystical exercises. While leaving the world, he was engaged in mystical exercise and endeavors. He performed the Fajr prayer with the ablution of the Esha night prayer for a period of 40 years. And used to keep fasting always. And used to break fasting after three days and

did not eat more than three loaves. He used to live always in a condition of weeping and hearing Sama in meetings. Before entering the circle of devotion of Khaja Hasan Basri, he was engaged in mystical exercise 40 years ago. After becoming a disciple, he was given all his belongings on the way of Allah.

As far as possible, he did not use his hands to touch money. If at any time he will Dinar to a fakir or needy person, then he used to wash his hands with such hardness that there will be such scratch on the hand, and it seems there may be hurt.

He used to live away from mankind and free from want. And used to meet with friends of Allah. When he knows that there is such a friend of Allah, then he will be used to going in his presence even if he lives in a long-distance area. He used to say first to all. And give respect to the people. And he will not ignore this matter.

Teaching: He spent part of his life teaching and instructing.

Respect for the people: He used to tell people that "You are servants of the king. So it is required of you in this matter because one who has love for the king gives respect to the king's slaves in this matter. We have love for Allah.

You are slaves of Allah. So it was that we had to respect you. Because your respect is the respect of Allah."

Less eating: The people have asked him why you eat less food. He told them, "I follow the prophet and Hazrat Ali Murtuza and my spiritual master. Because they have eaten less food. And keep hunger and fasting in good condition. If I do not follow them, he will not be called Darwesh. Because Darwesh is such a person who follows the sayings and doings of the prophet and Hazrat Ali Murtuza, if he does not follow them, then people will find him mean. and thinking him mean is like thinking of his mean spiritual master. Thinking of spiritual master as the means, Hazrat Ali Murtuza. And thinking of mean him is as mean as the prophet, and thinking of mean the prophet is as mean a thing of Allah in this matter.

The world and the people who demand it: He said there is regret upon such a person who has his heart toward Allah and took the world in his hands. Because there is anger upon the world. And from its creation, Allah was not seen by a look of mercy.

Darwesh: If any person belongs to Darwesh and wears a stainly dress of Darwesh persons.

And if he becomes their successor, then he will never touch a dinar. If he will touch, then he should not keep with him in this matter. If he keeps it with him, then he is not eligible for saintly dress. On the day of the judgment, there will be no place for him among the Darwesh people.

He said, "When it is nightfall, then he should eat whatever he finds in his house. If he will keep something for the next night, then think that he is having weak belief and is not a courageous person. He did not know the way of trust of Allah. He is still a beginner. He is not at the ending stage. He is a disciple, and for a disciple he is not suitable. He is unwise like a child. He is not wise. He is ill. And not a friend. He is walking on the way. He is not a guide. He is not perfect. An incomplete disciple. He is not having the status of a peer.

Sayings

1. It is required by the Darwesh that he should not leave following his peer.
2. The Darwesh is a person in whose heart there should be nothing except Allah.
3. The Darwesh's hand, stomach, and as well his bag should be empty.

4. The Darwesh will eat whatever he gets and engage in the worship of Allah.

Recital and daily round of prayer or recital: He used to be engaged in the recital of 'La Ila Ha Illa.'

Revelation and miracles: He was a person of revelation and miracles.

1. One day he was seen one person, on the way who was an ill and weak person. And he was standing in the sunlight. Nobody was paying attention to him. There came his mercy upon him. He was given a signal, and then the cloud came there soon. And made a shadow upon him. When that old man saw his miracle, he was requested for his health recovery. He prayed, and that old person became healthy at the same time. And he stood and began walking with happiness.

2. One day it happened that he went to the bank of river Tigris. There were some fakirs who were there waiting for the boat's arrival. At last, a boat came there, and it sat the people and did not allow the fakirs. Due to this matter, fakirs were sad. He was by his signal called and told them to say river Tigris that to become dry. Those fakirs have told this order

as per Hazrat's instruction to the river and river Tigris was becoming dry. And those fakirs have crossed the river with happiness.

3. One day he met some fakirs on the way. They have complained about their poverty and indigence. He was consoled them. And said it does not matter. From today onward there will be over their indigence. But there is a condition that they should not leave the edge of the shirt of Islamic law.

When they have reached back their houses, what they have seen is that there were cooking different kinds of dishes there. There were dinars with their women. In a surprised condition, they have asked how they got dinars by them?.

The women told that "One person came there, and he was given money to us. He told us that when your husband asks, then tell him one friend of Abdul Wahid was given money to them. And he went away from there."

4. One day some Darwesh came in his presence and were hungry. There was nothing for eating them. They have desire from him sweet for their eating. He was looking at the sky and praying in this matter. And at that time there was a shower of golden dinars falling from the sky. He was instructed to have

a darwesh person take such an amount as is required to purchase the sweet for them. Those Darwishes have done the same thing. But he did not eat a little from that sweet.

(Translated by Mohammed Abdul Hafeez)

2. Al-Fozail ibn Iyaz

Abu 'Ali al-Fozail ibn 'Iyaz al-Talaqani was born in Khorasan, and in the beginning of his career he is said to have been a highwayman. After conversion he went to Kufa and later to Mecca, where he resided for many years and died in 187 (803). He achieved considerable repute as an authority on Traditions, and his boldness in preaching before Harun al-Rashid is widely reported.

Fozail the highwayman and how he repented At the beginning of his career, Fozail-e Iyaz pitched his tent in the heart of the desert between Merv and Bavard. He wore

sackcloth and a woollen cap, and hung a rosary around his neck. He had many companions who were all of them thieves and highwaymen. Night and day they robbed and pillaged, and always brought the proceeds to Fozail since he was the senior' of them. He would divide the loot among the bandits, keeping for himself what he fancied. He kept an inventory of everything, and never absented himself from the meetings of the gang. Any apprentice who failed to attend a meeting he expelled from the gang. One day a great caravan was passing that way, and Fozail's confederates were on the alert for it. A certain man was' travelling in the convoy who had heard

rumour of the brigands. Sighting them, he took counsel with himself how he might conceal his bag of gold. "I will hide this bag," he said to himself. "Then if they waylay the caravan, I will have this capital to fall back on." Going aside from the road, he saw Fozail's tent and Fozail himself close by it, an ascetic by his looks and the clothes he wore. So he entrusted the bag of gold to him. "Go and put it in the corner of the tent," Fozail told him. The man did as he was bidden, and returned to the caravan halt, to find that it had been pillaged. All the luggage had been carried out, and the travellers bound hand and foot. The man

released them, and collecting the little that remained they took their departure. The man returned to Fozail to recover his bag of gold. He saw him squatting with the robbers, as they divided up the spoil. "Ah, I gave my bag of gold to a thief!" the man exclaimed. Seeing him afar off, Fozail hailed the man, who came to him. "What do you want?" he asked. "Take it from where you deposited it," Fozail bade him. "Then go." The man ran into the tent, picked up his bag, and departed. 50 al-fozail-e iyaz

"Why," cried Fozail's companions, "in the whole caravan we did not find so much as one dirham in cash, and you give back ten thousand dirhams!" "The man had a good opinion of me, and I have always had a good opinion of God, that He will grant me repentance," Fozail replied. "I justified his good opinion, so that God may justify my good opinion." One day later they waylaid another caravan and carried off the baggage. As they sat eating, a traveller from the caravan approached them. "Who is your chief?" he asked. "He is not with us," the brigands replied. "He is the other side of the tree by the river bank, praying." "But it is not the hour of prayer," the man exclaimed. "He is performing a work of supererogation," one of the thieves explained. "And he is not eating with you," the man went on. "He is fasting," the thief replied.

"But it is not Ramazan." "Supererogation again," the thief retorted. Greatly astonished, the traveller drew near Fozail who was praying with great humility. He waited until he had finished, then he remarked. "Opposites do not mingle, they say. How can one fast and rob, pray and at the same time murder Muslims?"

"Do you know the Koran?" Fozail asked the man. "I know it," the man replied. "Well then, does not Almighty God say And others have confessed their sins; they have mixed a righteous deed with another evil?" The man was speechless with astonishment. It is said that by nature he was chivalrous and highminded, so that if a woman was travelling in a caravan he never took her goods; in the same way, he would not pillage the property of anyone with slender capital. He always left each victim with a due proportion of his belongings. All his inclination was towards right doing. At the beginning of his exploits Fozail was passionately in love with a certain woman, and he always brought her the proceeds of his brigandage. In season and out of season he climbed walls in the infatuation of his passion for the woman, weeping all the while. One night a caravan was passing, and in the midst of the caravan a man was chanting the Koran. The following verse reached Fozail's ears: Is it not time that the hearts of

those who believe should be humbled to the remembrance of God? It was as though an arrow pierced his soul, as though that verse had come out to challenge Fozail and say, "O Fozail, how long will you waylay travellers? The time has come when We shall waylay you!"

Fozail fell from the wall, crying, "It is high time indeed, and past high time!" Bewildered and shamefaced, he fled headlong to a ruin. There a party of travellers was encamped. They said, "Let us go!" One of them interjected, "We cannot go. Fozail is on the road." "Good tidings!" Fozail cried. "He has repented." With that he set out and all day went on his way weeping, satisfying his adversaries. Finally there remained only a Jew in Bavard. He sought quittance of him, but the Jew would not be reconciled. "Today we can make light of these Mohammadans," he chuckled to his fellows. "If you want me to grant you quittance," he told Fozail, "clear this heap." He pointed to a mound of sand, to remove which would tax all the strength of a man except perhaps over a long period. The hapless Fozail shovelled away the sand little by little, but how should the task ever be completed? Then one morning, when Fozail was utterly exhausted, a wind sprang up and blew the heap clean away. When the Jew saw

what had happened he was amazed. "I have sworn," he told Fozail, "that until you give me money I will not grant you quittance. Now put your hand under this rug and take up a fistful of gold and give it to me. My oath will then be fulfilled, and I will give you quittance." Fozail entered the Jew's house. Now the Jew had put some earth under the rug. Fozail thrust his hand under, and brought forth a fistful of dinars which he gave to the Jew. "Offer me Islam!" cried the latter. Fozail offered him Islam, and the Jew became a Muslim. "Do you know why I have become a Muslim?" he then said. "It is because until today I was not certain which was the true religion. Today it has become clear to me that Islam is the true 3 religion; for I have read in the Torah that if any man repents sincerely and then places his hand on earth, the earth turns to gold. I had put earth under the rug to prove you. When you laid your hand on the earth and it turned to gold, I knew for sure that your repentance was a reality and that your religion is true." "For God's sake," Fozail begged a man, "bind me hand and foot and bring me before the Sultan, that he may exercise judgment against me for the many crimes I have committed." The man did as he requested. When the Sultan beheld Fozail, he observed in him the marks of righteous folk. 54 al-fozail-e iyaz

"I cannot do this," he said. And he ordered him to be returned to his apartment with honour. When he reached the door of the apartment he uttered a loud cry. "Hark at him shouting!" people remarked. "Perchance he is being beaten." "Indeed, I have been sorely beaten," Fozail replied. "In what part?" they asked. "In my soul," he answered. Then he went in to his wife. "Wife," he announced, 'I would visit God's House. If you wish, I will set you free.' "I will never go apart from you," his wife replied. "Wherever you may be, I will be with you." So they set out and in due time came to Mecca, Almighty God making the road easy for them. There he took up residence near the Kaaba, and met some of the Saints. He companioned Imam Abu Hanifa for a while, and many stories are told of his extreme discipline. In Mecca the gates of oratory were opened to him, and the Meccans thronged to hear him preach. Soon all the world was talking about him, so that his family and kinsmen set forth from Bavard and came to look upon him. They knocked at his door, but he would not open it. They for their part would not depart, so Fozail mounted the roof of his house. al-fozail-e iyaz 55

"What idlers you are!" he cried to them. "God give you employment!" He spoke many such words, till they all wept and were beside

themselves. Finally, despairing of enjoying his society, they went away. He still remained on the roof and did not open the door.

Fozail and Haran al-Rashid One night Harun al-Rashid summoned Fazl the Barmecide, who was one of his favourite courtiers. "Take me to a man this night who will reveal me to myself," he bade him. "My heart is grown weary of pomp and pride." Fazl brought Harun to the door of the house of Sofyan-e Oyaina. They knocked at the door. "Who is it?" Sofyan asked. "The Commander of the Faithful," Fazl replied. "Why did he trouble himself so?" Sofyan said. "I ought to have been informed, then I could have come myself to him." "This is not the man I am seeking," Harun commented "He fawns upon me like the rest." Hearing of what had happened, Sofyan said, "Fozail-e Iyaz is such a man as you are seeking. You must go to him." And he recited this verse: Or do those who commit evil deeds think that We shall make them as those who believe and do righteous deeds

"If I am seeking good counsel, this is sufficient," remarked Harun. They knocked at Fozail's door. "Who is it?" Fozail asked. "The Commander of the Faithful," Fazl replied. "What business has he with me, and what have I to do with him?" Fozail demanded. "Is it not a duty to obey those in authority?" countered

Fazl. "Do not disturb me," cried Fozail. "Shall I enter with an authority or a command?" said Fazl. "There is no such thing as authority," replied Fozail. "If you enter by force, you know what you are doing." Harun entered. As he approached Fozail, the latter blew out the lamp so as not to see his face. Harun stretched out his hand, and Fozail's hand met it. "How smooth and soft this palm is, if only it could escape from Hell-fire!" Fozail remarked. So saying, he arose and stood in prayer. Harun was much affected and weeping overcame him. "Say something to me," he begged. Fozail saluted him and then spoke. "Your ancestor, the Prophet's uncle, once demanded of the Prophet, 'Make me commander over some people.' The Prophet replied, 'Uncle, for one moment I have made you commander over yourself.' By this he meant, 'For you to obey God for one moment is better than a thousand years of people obeying you.' The Prophet added, 'Command shall be a cause of regretting on the Day of Resurrection.' " "Say more," Harun pleaded. "When Omar ibn Abd al-Aziz was appointed caliph," Fozail related, "he summoned Salem ibn Abd Allah, Raja' ibn Hayat, and Mohammad ibn Ka'b. 'I have been afflicted with this trial,' he told them. 'What am I to do? For I know this high office to be a trial, even though men count it for a blessing.'

One of the three said, 'If you wish tomorrow to escape from God's punishment, look upon aged Muslims as though each were your father, and regard youthful Muslims as your brothers, Muslim children as your own sons, treating them in all respects as one does one's father, brother, and son. "Say more," Harun repeated. "The lands of Islam are as your own house, and their inhabitants your family," Fozail said. "Visit your father, honour your brother, and be good to your son. I fear," he added, "that your handsome face will be sorely tried by the fire of Hell. Fear God, and obey His command. And be watchful and prudent; for on the Resurrection Day God will question you concerning every single Muslim, and He will exact justice from you in respect of every one. If one night an old woman has gone to sleep in a house without provisions, she will pluck your skirt on that Day and will give evidence against you." Harun wept bitterly, so that his consciousness was like to fail. "Enough! You have slain the Commander of the Faithful," chided Fazl the vizier. "Be silent, Haman," cried Fozail. "It is you and your creatures who are destroying him, and then you tell me that I have killed him. Is this murder?" At these words Harun wept even more copiously. "He calls you Haman," he said, turning to Fazl, "because he equates me

with Pharaoh." Then, addressing Fozail, he asked, "Have you a debt outstanding?" "Yes," replied Fozail. "A debt of obedience to God. If He takes me to task over this, then woe is me!" "I am speaking of debts owed to men, Fozail," said Harun. "Thanks be to God," cried Fozail, "who has blessed me abundantly, so that I have no complaint to make to His servants." Then Harun placed a purse of a thousand dinars before him. "This is lawful coin, of my mother's inheritance," he said. "Commander of the Faithful," said Fozail, "the counsels I have spoken to you have yielded no profit. Even now you have recommenced wrongdoing and resumed injustice. "What wrongdoing?" demanded Harun. "I call you to salvation, and you cast me into temptation. This is wrongdoing indeed," said Fozail. "I tell you, give back what you possess to its proper owner. You for your part give it to another to whom it should not be given. It is useless for me to speak." So saying, he rose up from the caliph's presence and flung the gold out of the door. "Ah, what a man he is!" exclaimed Harun, leaving Fozail's house. "Fozail is in truth a king of men. His arrogance is extreme, and the world is very contemptible in his eyes."

Anecdotes of Fozail One day Fozail was holding in his lap a four-year-old child, and by

chance placed his mouth on its cheek as is the wont of fathers. "Father, do you love me?" asked the child. "I do," replied Fozail. "Do you love God?" "I do." "How many hearts do you have?" the child asked. "One," answered Fozail. "Can you love two with one heart?" demanded the child.

Fozail at once realized that it was not the child speaking, but that in reality it was a Divine instruction. Jealous for God, he began to beat his head and repented. Severing his heart from the child, he gave it to God. One day Fozail was standing at Arafat. All the pilgrims there were weeping and wailing, humbling themselves and making lowly petition. "Glory be to God!" cried Fozail. "If so many men were to go to a man at one time and ask him for a silver penny, what do you say? Would that man disappoint so many?" "No," came the answer. "Well," said Fozail, "surely it is easier for Almighty God to forgive them all, than for that man to give a silver penny. For He is the most bountiful of the bountiful, so there is good hope that He will pardon all." Once Fozail's son suffered an obstruction of urine. Fozail came and lifted up his hands. "O Lord," he prayed, "by my love for Thee deliver him out of this sickness." He had not yet risen from his knees when the boy was healed. Fozail would

often say in prayer: "Lord God, have mercy! For Thou knowest my repentance; and do not punish me, for Thou hast all power over me." Then he would add, "O God, Thou keepest me hungry, and Thou keepest my children hungry. Thou keepest me al-fozail-e iyaz naked, and Thou keepest my children naked. Thou givest not to me a lantern by night. All these things Thou doest to Thy friends. By what spiritual station has Fozail earned this felicity from Thee?" For thirty years no man saw Fozail smile, except on the day when his son died. Then he smiled. "Master, what time is this for smiling?" he was asked. "I realized that God was pleased that my son should die," he answered. "I smiled to accord with God's good pleasure." Fozail had two daughters. When his end approached, he laid a last charge upon his wife. "When I die, take these girls and go to Mount Bu Qobais. There lift your face to heaven and say, 'Lord God, Fozail laid a charge upon me saying, 'Whilst I was alive, I protected these helpless ones as best I could. When Thou madest me a prisoner in the fastness of the grave, I gave them back to Thee.'" When Fozail was buried, his wife did as he had bidden her. She went out to the mountaintop and conveyed her daughters there. Then she prayed with much weeping and lamentation. At that very moment the

Prince of Yemen passed by there with his two sons. Seeing them weeping and making moan, he enquired, "Whence are you come?"

Fozail's wife explained the situation. "I give these girls to these my sons," the prince announced. "I give each of them as a dowry ten thousand dinars. Are you content with this?" "I am," their mother replied. At once the prince furnished litters and carpets and brocades, and conveyed them to Yemen. (This episode was taken from Muslim Saints and Mystics translated by A.J. Arberry)

3.Ebrahim ibn Adham

Abu Eshaq Ebrahim ibn Adham, born in Balkh of pure Arab descent, is described in Sufi legend as a prince who renounced his kingdom (somewhat after the fashion of the Buddha) and wandered westwards to Uve a Hfe of complete asceticism, earning his bread in Syria by honest manual toil until his death in c. 165 (782). Some accounts state that he was killed on a naval expedition against Byzantium. The story of his conversion is

a classic of Muslim hagiography.

The legend of Ebrahim ibn Adham

Ebrahim ibn Adham's saintly career began in the fol-

lowing manner. He was king of Balkh, and a whole

world was under his command; forty gold swords and

forty gold maces were carried before and behind him.

One night he was asleep on his royal couch. At mid-

night the roof of the apartment vibrated, as if someone

was walking on the roof.

"Who is there?" he shouted.

"A friend," came the reply. "I have lost a camel, and

am searching for it on this roof."

"Fool, do you look for the camel on the roof?"

cried

Ebrahim.

"Heedless one," answered the voice, "do you seek

for God in silken clothes, asleep on a golden couch?"

These words filled his heart with terror. A fire blazed within him, and he could not sleep any more.

When day came he returned to the dais and sat on his throne, thoughtful, bewildered and full of care. The ministers of state stood each in his place; his slaves were drawn up in serried ranks. General audience was proclaimed.

Suddenly a man with awful mien entered the chamber, so terrible to look upon that none of the royal retinue and servants dared ask him his name; the tongues of all clove to their throats. He advanced solemnly till he stood before the throne.

"What do you want?" demanded Ebrahim.

"I have just alighted at this caravanserai," said the man. "This is not a caravanserai. This is my palace.

You are mad," shouted Ebrahim.

"Who owned this palace before you?" asked the man.

"My father," Ebrahim replied.

"And before him?"

"My grandfather."

"And before him?"

"So-and-so."

"And before him?"

"The father of So-and-so."

"Where have they all departed?" asked the man.

"They have gone. They are dead," Ebrahim replied.

"Then is this not a caravanserai which one man enters and another leaves?"

With these words the stranger vanished. He was
Khezr, upon whom be peace. The fire blazed
more
fiercely still in Ebrahim's soul, and the anguish
within
him augmented momently. Visions by day
followed the
hearing of voices by night, equally mysterious
and
in-comprehensible.

"Saddle my horse," Ebrahim cried at last. "I
will go
to the hunt. I know not what this thing is that
has come
upon me today. Lord God, how will this affair
end?"

His horse was saddled and he proceeded to the
chase. Headlong he galloped across the desert;
it was as
if he knew not what he was doing. In that
state of
bewilderment he became separated from his
troops. On
the way he suddenly heard a voice.

"Awake!"

He pretended not to have heard, and rode on. A second time the voice came, but he heeded it not. A third time he heard the same, and hurled himself farther away. Then the voice sounded a fourth time.

"Awake, before you are stricken awake!"

He now lost all self-control. At that instant a deer started up, and Ebrahim prepared to give chase. The deer spoke to him.

"I have been sent to hunt you. You cannot catch me.

Was it for this that you were created, or is this what you were commanded?"

"Ah, what is this that has come upon me?" Ebrahim cried.

And he turned his face from the deer. He thereupon

heard the same words issuing from the pommel of his saddle. Terror and fear possessed him. The revelation became clearer yet, for Almighty God willed to complete the transaction. A third time the selfsame voice proceeded from the collar of his cloak. The revelation was thus consummated, and the heavens were opened unto him.

Sure faith was now established in him. He dismounted; all his garments, and the horse itself, were dripping with his tears. He made true and sincere repentance. Turning aside from the road, he saw a shepherd wearing felt clothes and a hat of felt, driving his sheep before him. Looking closely, he saw that he was a slave of his. He bestowed on him his gold-embroidered cloak and bejewelled cap, together with

the sheep, and took from him his clothes and hat of felt. These he donned himself. All the angelic hosts stood gazing on Ebrahim.

"What a kingdom has come to the son of Adham," they cried. "He has cast away the filthy garments of the world, and has donned the glorious robes of poverty."

Even so he proceeded on foot to wander over mountains and endless deserts, lamenting over his sins, until he came to Merv. There he saw a man who had fallen from the bridge and was about to perish, swept away by the river. Ebrahim shouted from afar.

"O God, preserve him!"

The man remained suspended in the air until helpers arrived and drew him up. They were astonished at

Ebrahim.

"What man is this?" they cried.

Ebrahim departed from that place, and marched on to Nishapur. There he searched for a desolate corner where he might busy himself with obedience to God. In the end he hit upon the famous cave where he dwelt for nine years, three years in each apartment. Who knows what occupied him there through the nights and days? For it needed a mighty man of uncommon substance to be able to be there alone by night.

Every Thursday he would climb above the cavern and collect a bundle of firewood. Next morning he would set out, for Nishapur and there sell the brush-wood. Having performed the Friday prayers, he would buy bread with the money he had gained, give half to a

beggar and use half himself to break his fast.
So he did
every week.

One winter's night he was in that apartment. It
was
extremely cold, and he had to break the ice to
wash. All

night he shivered, praying through till dawn.
By dawn
he was in danger of perishing from the cold.
By chance
the thought ~ of a fire entered his mind. He
saw a fur
on the ground. Wrapping himself up in the fur,
he fell
asleep. When he awoke it was -broad daylight,
and he
had become warm. He looked, and saw that
the fur
was a dragon, its eyes saucers of blood. A mighty ter-
ror came upon him.

"Lord God," he cried, "Thou didst send this
thing
unto me in a shape of gentleness. Now I see it
in a
dreadful form. I cannot endure it."

Immediately the dragon moved away, twice or thrice rubbed its face in the ground before him, and vanished.

Ibrahim ibn Adham goes to Mecca

When the fame of Ebrahim ibn Adham's doings spread abroad amongst men, he fled from the cave and set out towards Mecca. In the desert he encountered one of the great men of the Faith, who taught him the Greatest Name of God and then took his departure. Ebrahim called upon God by that Name, and immediately he beheld Khezr, upon whom be peace.

"Ebrahim," said Khezr, "that was my brother David who taught you the Greatest Name."

Then many words passed between Khezr and Ebrahim. Khezr was the first who drew Ebrahim out.

by the leave of God. Ebrahim relates as follows concerning the next stage of his pilgrimage.

"On reaching Dhat al-'Erq I saw seventy men wearing the patchwork frock lying dead there, the blood gushing out of their noses and ears. Circling them, I found one who still had a spark of life in him.

"'Young man,' I cried, 'what has happened here?'

"'Son of Adham,' he answered me, 'keep to the water and the prayer-niche. Go not far away, lest you be banished; and come not too near, lest you be anguished. Let no man be overbold in the presence of Sultan. Have a lively fear of the Friend who slays pilgrims as if they were Greek infidels, and wages war upon pilgrims. We were a Sufi community who had

set out into the desert trusting in God,
resolved not to
utter one word, to think of naught but God, to
move
and be still only with God in view and to heed
none
but Him. When we had crossed the desert and
were
come to the place where pilgrims robe
themselves in
white, Khezr, upon whom be peace, came to
us. We
greeted him, and he returned our salute, and
we were
very happy, saying, "Praise be to God, the
journey
was blessed, the quester has reached his
quest, for
such a holy person came out to meet us."
Forthwith a
voice cried within us, "You liars and
pretenders, such
were your words and covenant! You forgot Me,
and
busied yourselves with another. Depart! I will
not
make peace with you until I snatch away your
souls
in recompense and shed your blood with the
sword of

jealous wrath." These brave men whom you see lying here are all victims of this retaliation. Beware, Ebrahim! You too have the same ambition. Halt, or depart far away!"

"Why did they spare you, then?" I asked, deeply perplexed by his words.

"They told me, "They are ripe, you are still raw.

Live on a few moments yet, and you too will be ripe.

When you are ripe, you too will come in their wake."

So saying, he gave up the ghost."

Ebrahim was fourteen years crossing the desert, praying and humbling himself all the way. When he drew near to Mecca, the elders of the Haram hearing of his approach came out to meet him. He thrust himself ahead of the caravan so that no one might recognise him.

nize him. The servants preceded the elders, and they saw Ebrahim going ahead of the caravan; but not having seen him before, they did not recognize him.

Coming up to him, they cried, "Ebrahim ibn Adham is near at hand. The elders of the Haram have come out to meet him."

"What do you want of that heretic?" Ebrahim demanded.

Straightway they set upon him and beat him up.

"The elders of Mecca go out to meet him, and you call him a heretic?" they shouted.

"I say he is a heretic," Ebrahim repeated.

When they left him, Ebrahim turned to himself.

"Ha!" he cried. "You wanted the elders to come out to meet you. Well, you have collected a few punches."

Praise be to God that I have seen you get your wish! "

Ebrahim then took up residence in Mecca. A circle of companions formed around him, and he earned his bread by the labour of his hands, working as a carpenter.

Ebrahim at Mecca is visited by his son
When Ebrahim ibn Adham quitted Balkh he left behind him a suckling child. The latter, by now grown up, asked his mother one day about his father.

"Your father is lost," she replied.

The son thereupon made proclamation that all who desired to perform the pilgrimage should assemble.

Four thousand presented themselves. He gave them all their expenses to cover provisions and camels and led the party Meccawards, hoping that God might grant

him sight of his father. Reaching Mecca, they encountered by the door of the Holy Mosque a party of patch-work-frocked Sufis."Do you know Ebrahim ibn Adham?"
the son enquired.

"He is a friend of ours," they told him. "He is entertaining us, and has gone to hunt for food."

The son asked them to direct him, and he went in his track. The party emerging in the lower quarter of Mecca, he saw his father unshod and bareheaded coming along with a load of firewood. Tears sprang to his eyes, but he controlled himself and followed in his father's wake to the market. There his father began to shout.

"Who will buy goodly things for goodly things?"

A baker called to him and took the firewood in

exchange for bread. Ebrahim brought the bread and laid it before his companions.

"If I say who I am," the son feared, "he will run away."

So he went to take counsel with his mother as to the best way of recovering his father. His mother advised patience.

"Be patient until we make the pilgrimage." When the boy departed, Ebrahim sat down with his associates.

"Today there are women and children on this pilgrimage. Mind your eyes," he charged them.

All accepted his counsel. When the pilgrims entered Mecca and made the circumambulation of the Kaaba, Ebrahim with his companions also circled the Holy House. A handsome boy approached him, and

Ebrahim looked at him keenly. His friends noticed this and were astonished, but waited until they had finished the circumambulation.

"God have mercy on you!" they then said to Ebrahim. "You bade us not to glance at any woman or child, and then you yourself gazed at a handsome lad."

"Did you see?" Ebrahim exclaimed.

"We saw," they replied.

"When I left Balkh," Ebrahim told them, "I abandoned there a suckling son. I know that the lad is that son."

Next day one of the companions went out before Ebrahim to look for the caravan from Balkh. Coming upon it, he observed in the midst of the caravan a tent pitched all of brocade. In the tent a throne was set,

and the boy was seated on the throne, reciting the Koran and weeping. Ebrahim's friend asked if he might enter.

"Where do you come from?" he enquired.

"From Balkh," the boy replied.

"Whose son are you?"

The boy put his hand to his face and began to weep.

"I have never seen my father," he said, laying aside the Koran. "Not until yesterday — I do not know whether it was he or not. I am afraid that if I speak he will run away, as he ran away from us before. My father is Ebrahim-e Adham the King of Balkh."

The man seized him to bring him to Ebrahim. His mother rose and went along with him. Ebrahim, as

they approached him, was seated with his companions before the Yemeni Corner. He espied from afar his friend with the boy and his mother. As soon as the woman saw him she cried aloud and could control herself no longer.

"This is your father."

An indescribable tumult arose. All the bystanders and friends of Ebrahim burst into tears. As soon as the boy recovered himself he saluted his father. Ebrahim returned his greeting and took him to his breast.

"What religion do you follow?" he asked.

"The religion of Islam," answered his son.

"Praise be to God," cried Ebrahim. "Do you know the Koran?"

"I do."

"Praise be to God. Have you studied the faith?"

"I have."

Then Ebrahim would have departed, but the boy would not let go of him. His mother wailed aloud.

Turning his face to heaven, Ebrahim cried, "O God,
succour me!"

The boy immediately expired in his embrace.

"What happened, Ebrahim?" his companions cried out.

"'When I took him to my breast,' Ebrahim explained, 'love for him stirred in my heart. A voice spoke to me, 'Ebrahim, you claim to love Me, and you love another along with Me. You charge your companions not to look upon any strange woman or child, and

you have attached your heart to that woman and child.' When I heard this call, I prayed, 'Lord of Glory, come to my succour! He will so occupy my heart that I shall forget to love Thee. Either take away his life or mine.' His death was the answer to my prayer."

Anecdotes of Ebrahim ibn Adham

One day Ebrahim ibn Adham was asked, "What befell

you, that you quit your kingdom?"

"I was seated on my throne one day," he recalled. "A mirror was held up before me; I looked into that mirror and saw that my lodging was the tomb and therein was no familiar friend. I saw a long journey ahead of me, and I had no provision. I saw a just judge, and I had no defence. I became disgusted of my kingship.'

"Why did you flee from Khorasan?" they asked.

"I heard much talk there of the true friend," he replied.

"Why do you not seek a wife?" he was asked.

"Does any woman take a husband for him to keep

her hungry and naked?" he countered.

"No," they replied.

"That is why I do not marry," he explained.

"Any

woman whom I married would remain hungry and

naked. If I only could, I would divorce myself.

How

can I bind another to my saddle?"

Then turning to a beggar who was present, he asked

him "Do you have a wife?"

"No," the beggar replied.

"Do you have a child?"

"No."

"Excellent, excellent," Ebrahim exclaimed.

"Why do you say that?" asked the beggar
"The beggar who marries embarks on a ship.
When
the children come, he is drowned."

One day Ebrahim saw a beggar bewailing his lot.

"I guess you bought beggary gratis," he remarked.

"Why, is beggary for sale?" the beggar asked in astonishment.

"Certainly," Ebrahim replied. "I bought it with the kingdom of Balkh. I got a bargain."

A man once brought Ebrahim a thousand dinars.

"Take," he said.

"I do not accept anything from beggars," Ebrahim replied "But I am wealthy," the man retorted.

"Do you want more than you own already?"
Ebrahim asked

"Indeed," the man exclaimed.

"Then take it back," said Ebrahim. "You are the chief of the beggars. Indeed, this is not beggary. This is plain penury."

Ebrahim was told of an ecstatic youth who had extraordinary experiences and disciplined himself severely.

"Bring me to him so that I may see him," he said.

They took him to the youth.

"Be my guest for three days," the youth invited him.

Ebrahim stayed there and observed the youth's state

attentively. It surpassed even what his friends had said.

All night he was sleepless and restless, not reposing or

slumbering for a single moment. Ebrahim felt a certain jealousy.

"I am so frigid, and he is sleepless and unresting the whole night through. Come, let us investigate his case," he said to himself. "Let us discover if anything from Satan has invaded his state, or whether it is wholly pure and in all respects as it should be. I must examine the foundation of the matter. The foundation and root of the matter is what a man eats."

So he investigated what the youth was eating, and discovered that it came from unhallowed sources.

"God is most great. It is Satanic," Ebrahim exclaimed.

"I have been your guest for three days," he said to

the youth. "Now you come and be my guest for forty days."

The youth accepted. Now the food Ebrahim ate was

earned by the labour of his own hands. He took the

youth to his home and gave him of his own food.

Immediately his ecstasy vanished. All his ardour and

passion disappeared. That restlessness and sleepless-

ness and weeping of his departed.

"What have you done to me?" he cried.

"Yes," Ebrahim answered. "Your food was unhal-

lowed. Satan was all the time going and coming in you.

As soon as you swallowed lawful food, the manifesta-

tions he had been contriving in you became revealed

for what they were, the Devil's work."

Sahl ibn Ebrahim tells the following story. ^

I was making a journey with Ebrahim-e Adham, and on the way I fell sick. He sold all that he possessed and spent it on me. I begged him for something, and he sold his ass and spent the proceeds on me.

"Where is the ass?" I enquired when I recovered.

"I sold it," he replied.

"What shall I sit on?" I demanded.

"Brother," Ebrahim answered, "come, sit on my back."

And he lifted me on his back and carried me for three stages.

Every day Ebrahim went out to work for hire and laboured till night. All his earnings he expended on behalf of his companions. But by the time he had per-

formed the evening prayer and bought something and had returned to his friends the night was far gone.

One night his companions said, "He is late in coming. Come, let us eat some bread and go to sleep. That will be a hint for him to return earlier in future. He will not keep us waiting so long."

So they did. When Ebrahim returned he saw that they were asleep. Supposing that they had not eaten anything and had gone to sleep hungry, he at once lit a fire. He had brought a little flour back with him, so he made dough to give them something to eat when they woke, then they would be able to keep fast next day.

His companions awoke to see him with his beard on the floor, blowing on the fire; tears were streaming

from his eyes, and he was surrounded by smoke.

"What are you doing?" they asked.

"I saw you were asleep," Ebrahim replied. "I said to myself, perhaps you could not find anything and went to sleep hungry. So I am making something for you to eat when you awake."

"See how he thought about us, and how we thought about him," they exclaimed.

"Since you entered on this path, have you ever experienced happiness?" Ebrahim was asked.

"Several times," he replied. "Once I was on board ship and the captain did not know me. I was wearing ragged clothes my hair was untrimmed, and I was in a spiritual ecstasy of which all on board were unaware.

They laughed at me and ridiculed me. There was a joker on the ship, and every now and then he would come and grab me by the hair and pluck it out and slap me on the neck. In those moments I felt that I had attained my desire, and was very happy to be so humiliated.

"Suddenly a great wave arose, and all feared that they would perish. 'We must throw one of these fellows overboard,' cried the helmsman. 'Then the ship will be lighter.' They seized me to throw me into the sea. The wave subsided, and the ship resumed an even keel. That moment when they took me by the ear to throw me into the water I felt that I had attained my desire, and was happy.

"On another occasion I went to a mosque to sleep

there. They would not let me be, and I was so weak and exhausted that I could not get up. So they seized me by the foot and dragged me out. Now the mosque had three steps; my head struck against each step in turn, and the blood flowed forth. I felt that I had attained my desire. On each step that they dropped me, the mystery of a whole clime became revealed to me. I said, 'Would that the mosque had more steps, to increase my felicity!'

"On another occasion I was rapt in a state of ecstasy. A joker came and urinated on me. Then too I was happy.

"On yet another occasion I was wrapped in a fur jacket infested by fleas which devoured me unmercifully. Suddenly I remembered the fine clothes which I had

deposited in the treasury. My soul cried within me,
'Why, what pain is this?' Then too I felt that I had
attained my desire."

"Once," Ebrahim related, "I was journeying in the desert putting my trust in God. For some days I found nothing to eat. I remembered a friend of mine, but I said to myself, 'If I go to him, my trust in God will become void.' I entered a mosque with the words on my lips, 'I have put my trust in the Living One who dies not. There is no God but He.' A voice out of heaven cried, 'Glory be to that God who has emptied the face of the earth of those who trust in Him.' I said, 'Why these words?' The voice replied, 'How should that man be truly trusting in God who undertakes a long journey

for the sake o a morsel that a profane friend
may give
him, and then declare "I have put my trust in
the Living
One who dies not"? You have given the name
of trust
in God to a lie!"'

"Once I bought a slave," Ebrahim recalled.

"What is your name?" I asked.

"What you call me," he answered.

"What do you eat?"

"What you give me."

"What do you wear?"

"What you clothe me withal."

"What do you do?"

"What you command."

"What do you desire?" I asked.

"What has a servant to do with desire?" he replied.

"'Wretch that you are,' I said to myself, 'all your life you have been a servant of God. Well, now learn what it means to be a servant!'

"And I wept so long that I swooned away."

No one had ever seen Ebrahim sitting cross-legged.

"Why do you not sit cross-legged?" he was asked.

"I did sit that way one day," he replied. "I heard a voice from the air saying, 'Son of Adham, do servants sit so in the presence of their lords?' I at once sat upright and repented.

"Once I was travelling in the desert trusting in God, Ebrahim related. "For three days I found nothing to eat. The Devil came to me.

"Did you abandon your kingdom and so much

luxury in order to go on the pilgrimage hungry?' the Devil taunted me. 'You can also make the pilgrimage in style and not suffer so.

"Hearing this speech of the Devil, I lifted my head on high.

"'O God,' I cried, 'dost Thou appoint Thy enemy over Thy friend to torture me? Come to my succour! For I cannot cross this desert without Thy aid.'

"'Ebrahim,' a voice came to me, 'cast out what thou hast in thy pocket, that We may bring forth that which is in the Unseen.'

"I put my hand in my pocket. Four silver pennies were there which I had forgotten. As soon as I flung them away the Devil fled from me, and almighty materialized out of the Unseen."

"Once," Ebrahim recalled, "I was appointed to look after an orchard. The owner of the orchard came and said to me, 'Bring me some sweet pomegranates.' I brought some, but they were sour.

"'Bring me sweet ones,' the owner repeated. I brought another dishful, but they were also sour.

"'Glory be to God!' the owner cried. 'You have spent so long in an orchard, and you do not know ripe pomegranates?'

"'I look after your orchard, but I do not know what pomegranates taste like because I have never sampled any,' I replied

"'With such self-denial, I suspect you are Ebrahim-e Adham,' the owner said.

"When I heard these words, I departed from that place."

"One night," Ebrahim related, 'I saw Gabriel in a dream come down to earth out of heaven with a scroll in his hand.

"'What do you want?' I asked.

"'I am writing down the names of the friends of God,' Gabriel replied.

"'Write down my name,' I said.

"'You are not of them,' Gabriel answered.

"'I am a friend of the friends of God,' I rejoined.

"Gabriel pondered for a while. Then he said,

"'The command has come. Inscribe Ebrahim 's name the first of all. For on this Path hope materializes out of despair.'"

Ebrahim was travelling in the desert one day when he was accosted by a soldier.

"What are you?" the soldier asked.

"A servant," replied Ebrahim.

"Which is the way to habitation?" asked the soldier.

Ebrahim pointed to the graveyard.

"You are making fun of me," shouted the soldier, lashing out at Ebrahim's head. His head was broken, and the blood gushed forth.

The soldier put a rope round Ebrahim's neck and dragged him along. People from the nearby town coming that way stopped at the spectacle.

"Ignoramus, this is Ebrahim-e Adham, the friend of God," they cried.

The soldier fell at Ebrahim's feet and implored him to pardon him and acquit him of the wrong he had done him.

"You told me you were a servant," he pleaded. "Who is there who is not a servant?" Ebrahim replied.

"I broke your head, and you prayed for me," said the soldier.

"I prayed that you might be blessed for the way you treated me," was Ebrahim's answer. "My reward for the way you treated me was Paradise, and I did not wish that your reward should be Hell."

"Why did you direct me to the cemetery when I asked the way to habitation?" the soldier asked.

"Because every day the graveyard becomes more thronged, and the city more deserted," answered

Ebrahim.

Once Ebrahim passed by a drunkard. His mouth was foul, so he fetched water and washed the drunkard's mouth.

"Do you leave foul the mouth that has mouthed the name of God? That is irreverence!" Ebrahim said to himself.

"The ascetic of Khorasan washed your mouth," they told the man when he woke.

"I too now repent," the man declared.

After that Ebrahim heard in a dream, "Thou didst wash a mouth for My sake. I have washed thy heart."

I was once on shipboard with Ebrahim (relates Raja) when suddenly a wind sprang up and the world grew dark.

"Alas, the ship is sinking!" I cried.

"Fear not that the ship will sink," came a voice from the air. "Ebrahim-e Adham is with you."

Immediately the wind subsided, and the darkened world became bright.

Ebrahim wished to embark on a ship, but he had no money.

"Every one must pay a dinar," came the announcement.

Ebrahim prayed two rak'as, and said, "O God, they are demanding money from me and I have none."

Forthwith the whole sea was turned to gold. Ebrahim gathered a handful and gave it to them.

One day Ebrahim was seated on the bank of the Tigris stitching his threadbare robe. His needle fell into the river.

"You gave up such a mighty kingdom. What did you get in return?" someone asked him.

"Give back my needle," cried Ebrahim, pointing to the river.

A thousand fishes put up their heads from the water, each with a golden needle in its mouth.

"I want my own needle," said Ebrahim.

A feeble little fish held up Ebrahim's needle in its mouth.

"This is the least thing I have gotten by abandoning the kingdom of Balkh," said Ebrahim. "The rest you know nothing of."

One day Ebrahim came to a well. He let down the bucket, and it came up full of gold. He emptied it and let it down again, and it came up full of pearls. In merry mood he emptied it once more.

"O God," he cried, "Thou art offering me a treasury.

I know that Thou art all-powerful, and Thou knowest that I shall not be deluded by this. Give me water, that I may make my ablution."

Once Ebrahim was going on the pilgrimage in company.

"Not one of us has a camel or any provisions," said his fellow-pilgrims.

"Rely on God to provide for you," Ebrahim told them.

Then he added, "Look at those trees! If it is gold that

you desire, they will be turned to gold."

All the acacias had turned to gold by the Power of Almighty God.

One day Ebrahim was travelling with a party when they came to a fort. Before the fort was much brush-wood.

"We will pass the night here," they said. "There is plenty of brushwood, so we can make a fire."

They kindled a fire and sat in the light of the flames.

All ate dry bread, whilst Ebrahim stood in prayer.

"If only we had some hallowed meat to roast on this fire," said one.

Ebrahim finished his prayer. Then he said, "God is certainly able to give you hallowed meat."

Saying this, he stood once more in prayer.

Immediately came the roar of a lion. They watched as a lion approached dragging a wild ass. They took the ass, roasted it and ate it, whilst the lion crouched there watching them. (By A.J.Arberry from Muslim Saints And Mystics)

4.Hazrat Shaikh Habira Basri

He was revealer of secrets of Nasut (Alam-i-Nasut (Realm of Physical bodies) and Malkut (Malkuth means Kingdom. It is associated with the realm of matter/earth and relates to the physical world, the planets and the Solar System.)

Name : His name was Shaikh Habira.

Title : He was called with title of Aminuddin.

Education and training : He was become learned person when he was become 15

years old. And in few years he was become Quran-conner.

Worship and mystical exercises :Upon completion of knowledge of manifest he was engaged in worship, mystical exercise and endeavours. Hazrat used to read two Quran on daily basis. Except answering the call of nature he was used to live always in the condition of ablution. Hazrat who did not used sleep in the night time but he used to engage in the remembrance of Allah. He did not used to have contact with world and people of the world.

He has spent 30 years in the worship, mystical exercise and endeavours. One day he was in condition of sadness that 30 years were passed away but he could not get his aim in this matter.

He said in the court of Allah with humility and meekness, “Oh Allah, show him such a way as he himself is in a helpless condition that is burning, and so that he can met you by leaving all persons in this matter. So, in this way, he can reach you on this matter. He also prayed to forgive him.”

Invisible call: He was finished with his prayer and heard an invisible call in which it was said, “Oh, Haibra, we have forgiven you.

It is required by you to go in the presence of Hazifa Marshi."

Pledge and caliphate: Upon hearing this call, he went outside of his room and went in the presence of Hazifa Marshi. And who was given much respect. He told him, "Oh, Haibra, you have spent 30 years in sadness and problems, and you have engaged in endeavors and mystical exercises." But you have not reached the witness in this matter. Because you have done worship from your own side only. Which was done by you and not told by any person in this matter, as there will be a full effect if said by any person.

He told him that it is not possible to reach the place of the witness by automatic means. If there is to be any progress in endeavors, then also there will not be found for him the status of a witness unless and until there is no intercessor for him in this matter. Upon hearing this, he put his head on the foot of Hazrat Hazifat Marshi. He was entered into his circle of devotion. And in the time of one week, he was reached in the place of nearness. At the end of one year, Hazrat Hazifa Marshi was given the dress of saintliness to him.

Advice of the spiritual master: Hazrat Hazifa Marshi was given the following advice, and its translation is as follows. Follow the advice of the spiritual master so that your work may be completed in this matter. His spiritual master also advised keeping away from the world in a complete way and to adopt indigence and hunger.

The excellence of honour: He said that "When he was wearing saintly dress, then at that time the prophet and all holy saints and holy souls and all of them were blessed to visit him. And each and every soul prayed in his favor in this matter.

Weeping :He said that when he was wear saintly dress then he began weeping due to fear of Allah.As that work of Darweshi is difficulty.To day I have wear saintly dress then if there will be happen tomorrow by me any such work from there will be regret for me in this matter.

Glad tiding :When there was excellence of completion of devotion then at that time he was heard one invisible call in which it was said "Oh Haibra we have accepted you,"

Prayer : Once in weeping condition he was saying to Allah as follows.

Glad tidings: He was blessed with devotion, and then he heard one invisible call in which it was said, "Oh Habira, we have accepted you."

Prayer: One time in the weeping time, he was saying with Allah, "Oh Allah, Ba'ibra, who is a helpless and weak person. If you take account of his food, then he will be left in this matter. And he could not be able to give you an account of the fast breaking.

Glad tidings: He was heard one invisible call in which it was heard, "Oh Haibra We have made the account easy for you and done mercy. We are happy with you. We will give you a place in heaven. And fulfilled your desire and aim in this matter."

One event: Once a person wanted to give him a bag of 1000 dirhams. He had become unconscious upon seeing Darhams. When he had become in normal condition, then at that time his face color was yellow. He was shivering. When he was asked the reason, he said that the person who was followed was a way of Darweshi; then what is work with him with the world and Darhams. His aim should be the look of Allah.

Death: There is a difference in his age. Some have said his age was 120 years, and others have said his age was 130 years. He was left in this mortal world in the year 287 Hijri. Some have said he left this world in the year

279 Hijri in the month of Shawwal.

Caliph : Hazrat Mamshad Denuri is his famous and well-known caliph.

Special features of his Sufi chain: The Heberian Sufi chain members did not stay in the habitations. They used to always live in a condition of ablution. They did not have a connection with the people. Also did not accept gifts or presentations. On every third day, they used to break fast with grass or salt. One who wants to enter into this Sufi chain is required to adjustment with manifest and innermost.

Character: He was among the great learned persons. He was a leader of learned and holy persons of his time. He used to fast and break after some time for 5 or 6 days. He used to weep so much that when the people saw him in such a condition, they began weeping. Some time there will be thinking that he will die in such a condition of weeping. He used to live in the room. He did not have a relationship with the world and the people of the world.

During the night he used to be in a wake-up condition and engaged in the worship. Whatever he gets by writing, he will spend that money on his expenses. Sometimes it will happen that he did not eat more than three loaves in his food. He will not accept a

presentation by him. He used to perform the Fajr morning prayer with the ablution of the Isha night prayer.

In short, in mystic exercises and endeavors, he was a unique personality. It was his practice to read the holy Quran in two days and two nights. Upon wearing the saintly dress, he did not eat sugar and salt. It is also said that he did not eat mutton and ghee.

Teachings: His teachings are the capital of Sufism.

Darwesh: He said there is regret for such a Darwesh, one who eats the food of the kings and will sit with him. I do not know what his condition will be.

He said Darwesh should be unrelated to all persons. He should look like a mad person. He should not be happy about praise from anybody. He should not be upset by the abuse of anybody. He should always and entirely be engaged in the worship of Allah and which must be for him.

Food of the rich person: He said the food of the rich person is like the poison of killing. By eating this food, there will be Sayings, which will destroy the works.

1. When there is a favor from Allah, then there will be the ability to endeavor and mystical exercise. Then the heart will become bright

and clear.

2. There will be safety of faith in the Darwesh system.

3. When there will be presented before the student an unwanted thing for a student, then it is better for him to die instead of living.

4. The need of Darwesh is to find the owner of the Empyrean and nether regions.

5. There will not be given status to very greedy persons.

Recital : He used to engaged in remembrance of Allah “ La Illa Ha Illa.”

(Translated by Mohammed Abdul Hafeez)

5. Memshad Denuri

He was famous saint for the pity and mysticism. He got knowledge in the company of many Mashaiqs (sheikhs) and for this reason he was respected greatly by the people. As per historians he died in the year 299 A.H.

He used to keep the doors of his shrine always closed and no body was allowed to enter it. If he heard any knock on the door of the shrine then he used to ask are you travelers or local person.? If he would find the travelers then he used to open the door otherwise for the local persons it is kept closed for all time.

During the traveler's stay in the shrine he used to treat them greatly with his whole heartedness. If any person visits from the local residents then he would return them by saying that with your stay there will be love and affection with me and so at the time of your leaving it will be a matter of difficult thing for me.

Some persons asked him to pray for him then he replied him to reach into the court of Allah and said my prayers are not needed there. So that persons told him I do not know the court of Allah? And if you want to send me there then please inform me the address and its place. He told him that "The court of Allah is there where your existence will be finished." When that person heard his reply then he went to the lonely place and started remembrance of Allah. So Allah blessed him with great felicity.

Once there was dangerous flood came over there and all houses of the city drowned into

the water but his shrine was on the higher level so there was no damage of water and for this reason all persons of the city over there for the shelter and stayed there. At that time he saw that person who came over there by sitting on his prayer mat and which was floating on the water. So he asked him "How

he got such higher position". And he has replied him that "All this was due to his bounty and due to its miracle Allah freed me from all relations and all which you are looking here is due to your prayers only."

When he heard this and he told "Now I come to know that for indigent person the endeavours are must and necessary things." After this event he decided that he will not make fun of any darwesh person.

He used to tell that "Once a darwesh asked him if he likes then he will prepare halwa (sweet) for him? And when I heard this then he suddenly told him that what is relation in between devotion and halwa (sweet)?

When that darwesh heard this he left my place by telling what relation is in between devotion and halwa (sweet) and he reached in the jungle and died there. When he came to know the details of the event, so for this reason he repented in this matter."

He told once he was in debts for some money so he was worried in this matter and heard a divine call in his dream in which it was told that "Oh : miser we will pay all your debts so why you are worried for such small amounts of loan? And all for your needs it is your work to take the loans and it is our duty to settle your loan amounts." After that he never asked the debtors for the loan amounts details and

he used to pay loan amounts as per their demand.

His golden sayings are too many and so it is very difficult and tough task to gather all of them.

He told there are many kinds of idols.

Some person worship idols of their souls. Some person worship idols of their wealth.

Some person worship idols of their wives and children. Some person worship their industry and business.

Some persons worship their Prayers and Zakat (religious tax as a basic in function of Islam).

From the above sayings we can know well that all creations are busy in the worship of some thing or other and nobody is free from such worships. But such person will not be called the worshiper one who will not follow his soul's good and bad deeds because he will always scold his soul. It is must for the disciple to do service to his master and respect his brothers.

One should follow Sunnah (the practice) of the holy prophet by leaving all desires of his souls. He told "I never met any pious person unless I could not leave all of my knowledge and experience. Upon leaving the above things when I reached in the company of pious persons and heard their sayings then I benefited due to their blessings."

Due to the above reasons Allah blessed me and has granted me higher status. He told "If one person who met with pious person even with some lesser pride and ego then for him

the pious person's company and sayings are useless for him." He told "In the company of any pious person there will be peace and goodness in the heart and in the company of mischievous persons there will be tribulations and problems in the heart.

There are following three reasons of the worries.

1. To like prohibited things as per the saying of the holy prophet that the persons like such things which are prohibited for them.
2. To know the events of the persons who are passed away from the world.
3. For the waste of the present time which is available with him."

He told such time is better for us in which we are near to Allah and away from the creations. To clear such things from the heart which are liked by the creations because such things are not good for us. If one person who gather wisdom and good deeds of the pious persons who were passed away from the world and claim himself as pious person then he will not have the higher status of pious person because Marafat (the knowledge of Allah) require indigence and requisites by saying Allah, Allah. He told there are three kinds of Marafat (the knowledge of Allah) for which one should study the following things and to think how such things were created by Allah.

1. To think about all matters.
2. Destiny.
3. Creations.

He told the meaning of jameh is that and it is added in tauhid (unity of Allah) and tafriq (dissension) is that for which Shariah Law (Islamic law) differed it and not approved it.

The way of Allah is far away and it is very difficult to have patience on it and there are problems and difficulties on it. Its meaning is that to get the knowledge is very

difficult thing and on its way it is very difficult to have patience for the troubles and difficulties. He told wise persons get wisdom by thinking and by following silence. The souls of the prophets are busy in revelation and observation. The souls of truthful persons are in the nearness of Allah. He told "While cleansing the heart one should do the acts which are liked by Allah and to keep away from the mankind is called mysticism."

He told "The mysticism is in between choice and un-choice and the name of it is called expression. To leave un-necessary things is also called mysticism. To leave the thing which is liked by soul and heart is called trust." He told "To pray in the condition of hungers and to sleep when there is no energy is called indigence. Allah does not keep the darwesh person free from the following things.

1. To give him strength.
2. Or send death on him.
3. So that he will be free from all troubles and difficulties."

At the time of his death the persons asked how are you.? Then he told them what you are asking with me.? The persons told him to say kalima (Islamic creed) so he changed his direction towards the wall and told "I finished

myself fully for your sake and so this is the reward of keeping you as my friend." He told again "Since thirty years the heaven was presenting before me but he never liked it. And since three years I have lost my heart but I never wished for its recovery as truthful persons wish to

annihilate their hearts in the personality of Allah." He said this and died.

(Translated By Mohammed Abdul Hafeez)

6.Habib al-Ajami

Habib ibn Mohammad al-'Ajami al-Basri, a Persian settled at Basra, was a noted traditionist

who transmitted from al-Hasan al-Basri, Ibn Sirin, and other authorities. His conversion from

a life of ease and self-indulgence was brought about by al-Ha'an's eloquence; he was a frequent

attendant at his lectures, and became one of his

closest associates.

The story of Habib the Persian

Habib to begin with was a man of property and a

usurer. He dwelt in Basra, and every day he made the

rounds to dun his clients. If he got no money, he would demand payment for his shoe leather. In this manner he covered his daily expenditure. One day he had gone to look for a certain debtor. The man was not at home; so failing to find him, he demanded shoe leather payment.

"My husband is not at home," the debtor's wife told him. "I myself have nothing to give you. We had killed a sheep, but only the neck is left. If you like I will give you that."

"That is something," the usurer replied, thinking that he might at least take the sheep's neck off her and carry it home. "Put a pot on the fire."

"I have neither bread nor fuel," the woman answered.

"Very well," the man said. "I will go and fetch fuel and bread, and it can be charged to shoe leather."

So he went off and fetched these things, and the woman set the pot. When the pot was cooked the woman was about to pour its contents into a bowl when a beggar knocked at the door.

"If we give you what we have got," Habib shouted at him, "you will not become rich, and we will become poor ourselves."

The beggar, despairing, petitioned the woman to put something in the bowl. She lifted the lid of the saucepan, and found that its contents had all turned to

black blood. Turning pale she hurried back and taking Habib by the hand, led him towards the pot.

"Look what has happened to us because of your cursed usury, and your shouting at the beggar!" she cried. "What will become of us now in this world, not to mention the next?"

On seeing this, Habib felt a fire within him which never afterwards subsided.

"Woman," he said, "I repent of all I have done."

Next day he went out to look for his clients. It happened to be a Friday, and the children were playing in the street. When they sighted Habib they started to shout.

"Here comes Habib the usurer. Run away, lest his dust settles on us and we become as cursed as he!"

These words hurt Habib very much. He took his way to the meeting hall, and there certain phrases passed

Hasan of Basra's lips which struck Habib straight to the heart, so that he fainted. Then he repented.

Realizing what had happened, Hasan of Basra took him by the hand and calmed him.

As he returned from the meeting he was spotted by one of his debtors, who made to run away.

"Do not run away," Habib called to him. "Till now it was for you to flee from me; now I must run away from you."

He passed on. The children were still playing.
When
they sighted Habib they shouted again.

"Here comes Habib the penitent. Run away,
lest our
dust settles on him, for we are sinners
against God."

"My God and Master!" cried Habib. "Because
of
this one day that I have made my peace with
Thee,
Thou hast beaten the drums of men's hearts
for me and
noised my name abroad for virtue."

Then he issued a proclamation.

"Whoever wants anything from Habib, come
and
take it!"

The people gathered together, and he gave
away all
his possessions so that he was left penniless.
Another

man came with a demand. Having nothing left, Habib gave him his wife's chaddur. To another claimant he gave his own shirt, and remained naked. He repaired to a hermitage on the banks of the Euphrates, and there gave himself up to the worship of God. Every night and day he studied under Hasan, but he could not learn the Koran, for which reason he was nicknamed the Barbarian.

Time passed, and he was completely destitute. His wife asked him for housekeeping money constantly. So Habib left his house and made for the hermitage to resume his devotions. When night came he returned to his wife.

"Where have you been working, not to bring anything home?" his wife demanded.

"The one I have been working for is extremely generous," Habib replied. "He is so generous that I am ashamed to ask him for anything. When the proper time comes, he will give. For he says, 'Every ten days I pay the wages.'"

So Habib repaired daily to the hermitage to worship, till ten days were up. On the tenth day at the time of the midday prayer a thought entered his mind.

"What can I take home tonight, and what am I to tell my wife?"

And he pondered this deeply. Straightway Almighty

God sent a porter to the door of his house with an ass-load of flour, another with a skinned sheep, and another with oil, honey, herbs, and seasonings. The porters loaded up all this. A handsome young man accompanied them with a purse of three hundred silver dirhams. Coming to Habib's house, he knocked on the door.

"What do you want?" asked Habib's wife, opening the door.

"The Master has sent all this," the handsome youth replied. "Tell Habib, 'You increase your output, and we will increase your wages.'"

So saying, he departed. At nightfall Habib proceeded homeward, ashamed and sorrowful. As he

approached his house, the aroma of bread and cooking assailed his nostrils. His wife ran to greet him and wiped his face and was gentle with him as she had never been before.

"Husband," she cried, "the man you are working for is a very fine gentleman, generous and full of loving kindness. See what he sent by the hand of a handsome young man! And the young man said, 'When Habib comes home, tell him. You increase your output, and we will increase your wages.'"

Habib was amazed.

"Wonderful!" he exclaimed. "I worked for ten days, and he did me all this kindness. If I work harder, who

knows what he will do?"

And he turned his face wholly away from worldly things and gave himself up to God's service.

The miracles of Habib

One day an old woman came to Habib and, falling at his feet, wept bitterly.

"I have a son who has been absent from me a long time. I can no longer endure to be parted from him. Say

a prayer to God," she begged Habib. "It may be that by the blessing of your prayer God will send him back to me."

"Have you any money?" Habib asked her.
"Yes, two dirhams," she replied.
"Bring them, and give them to the poor."

And Habib recited a prayer, then he said to the old woman,

"Be gone. Your son has returned to you."

The old woman had not yet reached the door of her house, when she beheld her son.

"Why, here is my son!" she shouted, and she brought him to Habib.

"What happened?" Habib enquired of him.

"I was in Kerman," the son replied. "My teacher had sent me to look for some meat. I obtained the meat and was just returning to him, when the wind seized hold of me. I heard a voice saying,

"Wind, carry him to his own home, by the blessing

of Habib's prayer and the two dirhams given in alms."¹¹

One year on the eighth day of Dho 1-Hejja, Habib

was seen in Basra and on the ninth day at Arafat.

Once a famine was raging in Basra. Habib purchased

many provisions on credit and gave them away as

alms. He fastened his purse and placed it under his pil-

low. When the tradesmen came to demand payment, he

would take out his purse and it was full of dirhams,

which he gave away as loans.

Habib had a house in Basra on the crossroads. He

also had a fur coat which he wore summer and winter.

Once, needing to perform the ritual washing, he arose

and left his coat on the ground. Hasan of Basra, hap-

peming on the scene, perceived the coat flung in the road.

"This 'barbarian' does not know its value," he commented. "This fur coat ought not to be left here. It may get lost."

So he stood there watching over it. Presently Habib returned.

"Imam of the Muslims," he cried after saluting Hasan, "why are you standing here?"

"Do you not know," Hasan replied, "that this coat ought not to be left here? It may get lost. Say, in whose charge did you leave it?"

"In His charge," Habib answered, "who appointed you to watch over it."

One day Hasan came to call on Habib. Habib placed two rounds of barley bread and a little salt before Hasan. Hasan began to eat. A beggar came to the door. and Habib gave the two rounds and the salt to him.

"Habib," remarked the astonished Hasan, "you are a worthy man. If only you had some knowledge, it would be better. You took the bread from under the nose of your guest and gave it all to the beggar. You ought to have given a part to the beggar and a part to the guest."

Habib said nothing. Presently a slave entered with a tray on his head. A roast lamb was on the tray,

togeth-er with sweetmeat and fine bread, and five hundred sil-ver dirhams. He set the tray before Habib. Habib gave the money to the poor, and placed the tray before Hasan.

"Master," he said when Hasan had eaten some of the roast, "you are a good man. If only you had a little faith, it would be better. Knowledge must be accompa-nied by faith."

One day officers of Hajjaj were searching for Hasan.

He was hiding in Habib's hermitage.

"Have you seen Hasan today?" the officers demand-ed of Habib.

"I have seen him," he answered.

"Where was he?"

"In this hermitage."

The officers entered the hermitage, but for all their searching they did not find Hasan. ("Seven times they laid their hands on me," Hasan afterwards related, "but they did not see me.")

"Habib," Hasan remarked on leaving the hermitage, "you did not observe your duty to your master. You pointed me out."

"Master," Habib replied, "it was because I told the truth that you escaped. If I had lied, we would both have been arrested."

"What did you recite, that they did not see me?" Hasan asked.

I recited the Throne-verse ten times," Habib answered. "Ten times I recited The Messenger believes, and ten times Say, He is God, One. Then I said, 'O God, I have committed Hasan to Thee. Watch over him.' "

Hasan once wished to go to a certain place. He came down to the bank of the Tigris, and was pondering something to himself when Habib arrived on the scene.

"Imam, why are you standing here?" he asked.

"I wish to go to a certain place. The boat is late," Hasan replied.

"Master, what has happened to you?" Habib demanded. "I learned all that I know from you. Expel

from your heart all envy of other men. Close your heart against worldly things. Know that suffering is a precious prize, and see that all affairs are of God. Then set foot on the water and walk."

With that Habib stepped on to the water and departed. Hasan swooned. When he recovered, the people asked him.

"Imam of the Muslims, what happened to you?"

"My pupil Habib just now reprimanded me," he replied. "Then he stepped on the water and departed, whilst I remained impotent. If tomorrow a voice cries, 'Pass over the fiery pathway' — if I remain impotent like this, what can I do?"

"Habib," Hasan asked later, "how did you discover this power?"

"Because I make my heart white, whereas you make paper black," Habib replied.

"My learning profited another, but it did not profit me," Hasan commented.

(Translated by A.J.Arberry)

7. Abu Yazid al-Bestami

Abu Yazid Taifur ibn 'Isa ibn Sorushan al-Bestami was born in Bestam in north-eastern Persia, the grandson of a Zoroastrian; there he died in 261(874) or 264(877), and his mausoleum still stands. The founder of the ecstatic ("drunken") school of Sufism, he is famous for the boldness of his expression of the mystic's complete absorption into the Godhead. In particular his description of a journey into Heaven (in imitation of the Prophet Mohammad's "ascension"), greatly

elaborated by later writers, exercised a powerful influence on the imagination of all who came after him.

Abu Yazid-e Bestami: birth and early years
 The grandfather of Abu Yazid-e Bestami was a Zoroastrian; his father was one of the leading citizens of Bestam. Abu Yazid's extraordinary career began from the time he was in his mother's womb. "Every time I put a doubtful morsel in my mouth," his mother would say, "you stirred in my womb and would not keep still until I had put it out of my mouth." This statement is confirmed by words spoken by Abu Yazid himself.

"What is best for a man on this path?" he was asked. "Congenital felicity," he replied. "And if that is missing?" "A strong body." "And if that is lacking?" "An attentive ear." "And without that?" "A knowing heart." "And without that?" "A seeing eye." "And without that?" "Sudden death." In due course his mother sent him to school. He learned the Koran, and one day his master was explaining the meaning of the verse in the Sura of Loqman, Be thankful to Me, and to thy parents. These words moved the heart of Abu Yazid. "Sir," he said, laying down his tablet,

"please give me permission to go home and say something to my mother." The master gave him leave, and Abu Yazid went home. "Why, Taifur," cried his mother, "why have you come home? Did they give you a present, or is it some special occasion?" "No," Abu Yazid replied. "I reached the verse where God commands me to serve Him and you. I cannot be manager in two houses at once. This verse stung me to the quick. Either you ask for me from God, so that I may be yours entirely, or apprentice me to God, so that I may dwell wholly with Him." "My son, I resign you to God, and exempt you from your duty to me," said his mother. "Go and be God's." "The task I supposed to be the hindmost of all tasks proved to be the foremost," Abu Yazid later recalled. "That was to please my mother. In pleasing my mother, I attained all that I sought in my many acts of self discipline and service. It fell out as follows. One night my mother asked me for water. I went to fetch her some, but there was none in the jug. I fetched the pitcher, but none was in it either. So I went down to the river and filled the pitcher with water. When I returned to the house, my

mother had fallen asleep. "The night was cold. I kept the jug in my hand. When my mother awoke from sleep she drank some water and blessed me. Then she noticed that the jug was frozen to my hand. 'Why did you not lay the jug aside?' she exclaimed. 'I was afraid that you might wake when I was not present,' I answered. 'Keep the door half-open,' my mother then said. "I watched till near daybreak to make sure if the door was properly half-open or not, and that I should not have disregarded her command. At the hour of

dawn, that which I had sought so many times entered by the door." After his mother resigned him to God, Abu Yazid left Bestam and for thirty years wandered from land to land, disciplining himself with continuous vigil and hunger. He attended one hundred and thirteen spiritual preceptors and derived benefit from them all. Amongst them was one called Sadiq. He was sitting at his feet when the master suddenly said, "Abu Yazid, fetch me that book from the window." "The window? Which window?" asked Abu Yazid. "Why," said the master, "you have been coming here all this time, and you have not

seen the window?" "No," replied Abu Yazid. "What have I to do with the; window? When I am before you, I close my eyes to everything else. I have not come to stare about." "Since that is so," said the teacher, "go back to Bestam. Your work is completed." It was hinted to Abu Yazid that in a certain place a great teacher was to be found. He came from afar to see him. As he approached, he saw the reputed teacher spit in the direction of Mecca. He at once retraced his steps. "If he had achieved anything at all in the way," he remarked, "he would never have been guilty of transgressing the Law."

In this connection it is stated that his house was forty paces from the mosque, and he never spat on the road out of respect for the mosque. It took Abu Yazid a full twelve years to reach the Kaaba. This was because at every oratory he passed he would throw down his prayer rug and perform two rak'as. "This is not the portico of an earthly king," he would say, "that one may run thither all at once." So at last he came to the Kaaba, but that year he did not got to Medina. "It would not be seemly to make that an appendage of this visitation," he explained. "I will put on

pilgrim robes for Medina separately." Next year he returned once more, donning the pilgrim garb separately at the beginning of the desert. In one town he passed through on the way a great throng became his followers, and as he left a crowd went in his wake. "Who are those men?" he demanded, looking back. "They wish to keep you company," came the answer. "Lord God!" Abu Yazid cried, "I beg of Thee, veil not Thy creatures from Thee through me!" Then, desiring to expel the love of him from their hearts and to remove the obstacle of himself from their path, having performed the dawn prayer he looked at Abu Yazid Al-Bestami them and said, "Verily I am God; there is no god but I; therefore serve Me." "The man has become mad!" they cried. And they left him and departed. Abu Yazid went on his way. He found on the road a skull on which was written, Deaf, dumb, blind—they do not understand. Picking up the skull with a cry, he kissed it. "This seems to be the head," he murmured, "of a Sufi annihilated in God—he has no ear to hear the eternal voice, no eye to behold the eternal beauty, no tongue to praise God's greatness, no reason to

understand so much as a mote of the true knowledge of God. This verse is about him."

Once Abu Yazid was going along the road with a camel on which he had slung his provisions and saddle. "Poor little camel, what a heavy load it is carrying," someone cried. "It is really cruel." Abu Yazid, having heard him say these words over and over, at last replied. "Young man, it is not the little camel that lifts the load." The man looked to see if the load was actually on the camel's back. He observed that it was a full span above its back, and that the camel did not feel any weight at all. "Glory be to God, a wondrous deed!" the man exclaimed. "If I conceal from you the true facts about myself, you thrust out the tongue of reproach," said Abu Yazid. "If I disclose them to you, you cannot bear the facts. What is one to do with you?"

After Abu Yazid had visited Medina, the order came to him to return to care for his mother. He accordingly set out for Bestam, accompanied by a throng. The news ran through the city, and the people of Bestam came out to welcome him a good way from the town. Abu Yazid was likely to be so

preoccupied with their attentions that he would be detained from God. As they approached him, he drew a loaf out of his sleeve. Now it was Ramazan; yet he stood and ate the loaf. As soon as the people of Bestam saw this, they turned away from him. "Did you not see?" Abu Yazid addressed his companions "I obeyed an ordinance of the sacred Law, and all the people rejected me." He waited patiently until nightfall. At midnight he entered Bestam and, coming to his mother's house, he stood a while listening. He heard sounds of his mother performing he ablutions and praying. "Lord God, care well for our exile. Incline the hearts of the shaikhs towards him, and vouchsafe him to do all things well.' Abu Yazid wept when he heard these words. Then he knocked on the door.

"Who is there?" cried his mother. "Your exile," he replied. Weeping, his mother opened the door. Her sight was dimmed. "Taifur," she addressed her son, "do you know what has dimmed my sight? It is because I have wept so much being parted

from you, and my back is bent double from the load of grief I have endured."

The Ascension of Abu Yazid Abu Yazid related as follows. I gazed upon God with the eye of certainty after that He had advanced me to the degree of independence from all creatures and illumined me with His light, revealing to me the wonders of His secrets and manifesting to me the grandeur of His He-ness. Then from God I gazed upon myself, and considered well the secrets and attributes of my self. My light was darkness beside the light of God; my grandeur shrank to very meanness beside God's grandeur; my glory beside God's glory became but vainglory. There all was purity, here all was foulness. When I looked again, I saw my being by God's light. I realized that my glory was of His grandeur and glory. Whatever I did, I was able to do through His omnipotence. Whatever the eye of my physical body perceived, it perceived through Him. I gazed with the

eye of justice and reality; all my worship proceeded from God, not from me, and I had supposed that it was I who worshipped Him. I

said, "Lord God, what is this?" He said, "All that I am, and none other than I." Then He stitched up my eye, not to be the means of seeing and so that I might not see, and He instructed the gaze of my eye in the root of the matter, the He-ness of Himself. He annihilated me from my own being, and made me to be everlasting through His own everlastingness, and He glorified me. He disclosed to me His own Selfhood, unjostled by my own existence. So God, the one Truth, increased in me reality. Through God I gazed on God, and I beheld God in reality. There I dwelt a while, and found repose. I stopped up the ear of striving; I withdrew the tongue of yearning into the throat of disappointment. I abandoned acquired knowledge, and removed the interference of the soul that bids to evil. I remained still for a space, without any instrument, and with the hand of God's grace I swept superfluities from the pathway of root principles. God had compassion on me. He granted me eternal knowledge, and put into my throat a tongue of His goodness. He created for me an eye out of His light, and I saw all creatures through God. With the tongue of His goodness I communed with

God, and from the knowledge of God I acquired knowledge, and by His light I gazed on Him. He said, "O thou all without all with all, without instrument with instrument!" I said, "Lord God, let me not be deluded by this. Let me not become self-satisfied with my own being, not to yearn for Thee. Better it is that Thou shouldst be mine without me, than that I should be my own without Thee. Better it is that I should speak to Thee through Thee, than that I should speak to myself without Thee." He said, "Now give ear to the Law, and transgress not My commands and forbiddings, that thy strivings may earn Our thanks." I said, "In somuch as I profess the faith and my heart firmly believes, if Thou givest thanks, it is better that Thou shouldst thank Thyself rather than Thy slave; and if Thou blamest, Thou art pure of all fault." He said, "From whom didst thou learn?" I said, "He who asks this question knows better than he who is asked; for He is both the Desired and the Desirer, the Answered and the Answerer." When He had perceived the purity of my inmost soul, then my soul heard a shout of God's satisfaction; He sealed me with His good pleasure. He illumined me, and

delivered me out of the darkness of the carnal soul and the foulnesses of the fleshly nature. I knew that through Him I lived; and of His bounty I spread the carpet of gladness in my heart. He said, "Ask whatsoever thou wilt." I said, "I wish for Thee, for Thou art more excellent than bounty, greater than generosity, and through Thee I have found content in Thee. Since Thou art mine, I have rolled up the scroll of bounty and generosity. Keep me not from Thee, and proffer not before me that which is inferior to Thee." For a while He did not answer me. Then, laying the crown of munificence on my head, He spoke. "Truth thou speakest, and reality thou seekest, in that thou hast seen the truth and heard the truth." I said, "If I have seen, through Thee I have seen, and if I have heard, through Thee I have heard. First Thou heardest, then I heard." And I uttered many praises to Him. Consequently He gave me wings of majesty, so that I flew in the arenas of His glory and beheld the wonders of His handiwork. Perceiving my weakness and recognizing my need, He strengthened me with His own strength and arrayed me with His own adornment. He laid the crown of

munificence on my head, and opened unto me the door of the palace of Unity. When He perceived that my attributes were annihilated in His attributes, He bestowed on me a name of His own presence and addressed me with His own Selfhood. Singleness became manifest; duality vanished. He said, "Our pleasure is that which is thy pleasure, and thy pleasure is that which is Our pleasure. Thy speech admits no defilement, and none takes thee to task on account of thy I-ness." Then He made me to taste the stab of jealousy, and revived me anew. I came forth pure from the furnace of testing. Then He spoke. "Whose is the Kingdom?" I said, "Thine." He said, "Whose is the Command?" I said, "Thine." He said, "Whose is the Choice?" I said, "Thine." Since these words were the very same as He had heard at the beginning of the transaction, He desired to demonstrate to me that, had not His mercy preceded, creation would never have found repose, and that but for Love, Omnipotence would have wreaked destruction on all things. He gazed on me with the eye of Overwhelming through the medium of Allcompelling, and once more no trace of me

was visible. In my intoxication I flung myself into every valley. I melted my body in every crucible in the fire of jealousy.

I galloped the steed of questing in the broad expanse of the wilderness; no better game I saw than utter indigence, nothing I discovered better than total incapacity. No lamp I saw brighter than silence, no speech I heard better than speechlessness. I became a dweller in the palace of silence; I clothed myself in the stomacher of fortitude, till matters reached their crux. He saw my outward and inward parts void of the flaw of fleshly nature. He opened a fissure of relief in my darkened breast, and gave me a tongue of divestiture and unity. So now I have a tongue of everlasting grace, a heart of light divine, an eye of godly handiwork. By his succour I speak, with His power I grasp. Since through Him I live, I shall never die. Since I have reached this stage, my token is eternal; my expression everlasting; my tongue is the tongue of unity, my spirit is the spirit of divestiture. Not of myself I speak, that I should be mere narrator, neither through myself do I speak, that I should be mere remembrancer. He moves my tongue

according as He wills, and in all this I am but an interpreter. In reality the speaker is He, not I. Now, having magnified me, He spoke again. "The creatures desire to see thee." I said, "I desire not to see them. If Thou likest to bring me forth before the creatures, I will not oppose Thee. Array me in Thy Unity, that when Thy creatures see me and gaze upon Thy handiwork, they will have seen the Artificer, and I shall not be there at all." This desire He granted me; and He laid the crown of munificence on my head, and caused me to surpass the station of my fleshly nature. Then He said, "Come before My creatures." I took one step out of the Presence. At the second step I fell headlong. I heard a cry. "Bring back My beloved, for he cannot be without Me, neither knows he any path save to Me."

Abu Yazid also related the following. When I reached Unity—and that was the first moment that I gazed upon Unity—for many years I ran in that valley on the feet of understanding; till I became a bird whose body was of Oneness, whose wings were of Everlastingness. I kept flying in the firmament of unconditionedness. When I had vanished from the things created, I spoke. "I

have reached the Creator." Then I lifted up my head from the valley of Lordship. I quaffed a cup, the thirst for which I never slaked in all eternity. Then for thirty thousand years I flew in the expanse of His Unity, and for thirty thousand years more I flew in Divinity, and for thirty thousand years more I flew in Singularity. When ninety thousand years had come to an end, I saw Abu Yazid, and all that I saw, all was I. Then I traversed four thousand wildernesses, and reached the end. When I gazed, I saw myself at the beginning of the degree of the prophets. Then for such a while I went on in that infinity, that I said, "No one has ever reached higher than this. Loftier than this no station can be." When I looked well, I saw that my head was at the sole of the foot of a prophet. Then I realized that the end of the state of the saints is but the beginning of the states of the prophets; to the end of the prophets there is no term. Then my spirit transcended the whole Dominion, and Heaven and Hell were displayed to it; but it heeded naught Whatever came before it, that it could not suffer. To the soul of no prophet it reached, without it gave greeting. When it

reached the soul of God's Chosen One, upon him be peace, there it beheld a hundred thousand seas of fire without end, and a thousand veils of light. Had I so much as dipped my foot in the first of those seas, I would have been consumed and given myself over to destruction. Therefore I became so bewildered with awe and confusion, that naught remained of me. However I desired to be able to see but the tent-peg of the pavilion of Mohammad, God's Messenger, I had not the boldness. Though I had attained to God, I had not the boldness to attain to Mohammad. Then Abu Yazid said, "O God, whatsoever thing I have seen, all has been I. There is no way for me to Thee, so long as this 'I' remains; there is no transcending my selfhood for me. What must I do?" The command came, "To be delivered out of thy thouness, follow after Our beloved, the Arab Mohammad. Anoint thine eye with the dust of his foot, and continue following after him.

Abu Yazid and Yahya-e Mo'adh Yahya-e Mo'adh wrote a letter to Abu Yazid saying, "What do you say of a man who has quaffed a cup of wine, and become intoxicated from eternity to eternity?" Abu Yazid replied,

"That I know not. What I do know is this, that here is a man who in a single night and a day drains all the oceans of eternity to eternity and then asks for more." Yahya-e Mo'adh wrote again, "I have a secret to tell you, but our rendezvous is in Paradise. There under the shadow of Tuba I will tell it you." And he sent along with the letter a loaf saying, "The shaikh must avail himself of this, for I kneaded it with water from the well of Zem Zem."

In his reply Abu Yazid referred to Yahya's secret saying, "As for the rendezvous you mention, with His remembrance, I enjoy even now possession of Paradise and the shade of the tree Tuba. So far as the loaf is concerned, however, that I cannot avail myself of. You stated with what water you kneaded it, but you did not mention what seed you sowed." So Yahya-e Mo'adh conceived a great yearning to visit Abu Yazid. He arrived at the hour of the prayer before sleeping. "I could not disturb the shaikh then," Yahya recalled. "At the same time I could not contain myself till morning. So I proceeded to the place in the desert where they told me he was to be

found. I saw the shaikh perform the prayer before sleeping, then till the next day he stood on the tips of his toes. I stood rooted in amazement, and heard him all night engaged in prayer. When dawn came, he uttered the words, 'I take refuge with Thee from asking of Thee this station.'" Yahya then recovering himself greeted Abu Yazid, and enquired of him what had befallen him in the night. "More than twenty stations were enumerated to me," Abu Yazid told him. "I desire not one of these, for they are all stations of veiling." "Master, why did you not ask God for gnosis, seeing that He is the King of kings and has said, 'Ask whatsoever you will?'" demanded Yahya. "Be silent!" Abu Yazid cried. "I am jealous of myself to know Him, for I desire none but He to know Him. Where His knowledge is, what business have I to intervene? That indeed is His will, Yahya, only He, and no other, shall know Him." "By the majesty of God," Yahya implored, "grant me some portion of the gift you were vouchsafed last night." "If you were given the election of Adam, the holiness of Gabriel, the friendship of Abraham, the yearning of Moses, the purity of Jesus, and the love of

Mohammad," Abu Yazid replied, "still you would not be satisfied. You would seek for more, transcending all things. Keep your vision fixed on high, and descend not; for whatever you descend into, by that you will be veiled."

Abu Yazid and his disciple There was a certain ascetic who was one of the great saints of Bestam. He had his own followers and admirers, and at the same time he was never absent from the circle of Abu Yazid. He listened to all his discourses, and sat with his companions.

One day he remarked to Abu Yazid, "Master, today is thirty years that I have been keeping constant fast. By night too I pray, so that I never sleep at all. Yet I discover no trace in myself of this knowledge of which you speak. For all that I believe in this knowledge, and I love this preaching." "If for three hundred years," said Abu Yazid, "you fast by day and pray by night, you will never realize one atom of this discourse." "Why?" asked the disciple. "Because you are veiled by your own self," Abu Yazid replied. "What is the remedy for this?" the man asked. "You will never accept

it," answered Abu Yazid. "I will so," said the man. "Tell me, so that I may do as you prescribe." "Very well," said Abu Yazid. "This very hour go and shave your beard and hair. Take off these clothes you are wearing, and tie a loincloth of goat's wool about your waist. Hang a bag of nuts round your neck, then go to the marketplace. Collect all the children you can, and tell them, 'I will give a nut to everyone who slaps me.' Go round all the city in the same way; especially go everywhere people know you. That is your cure." "Glory be to God! There is no god but God," cried the disciple on hearing these words.

"If an infidel uttered that formula, he would become a believer," remarked Abu Yazid. "By uttering the same formula you have become a polytheist." "How so?" demanded the disciple. "Because you counted yourself too grand to be able to do as I have said," replied Abu Yazid. "So you have become a polytheist. You used this formula to express your own importance, not to glorify God." "This I cannot do," the man protested. "Give me other directions." "The remedy is what I have said," Abu Yazid declared. "I cannot do it,"

the man repeated. "Did I not say that you would not do it, that you would never obey me?" said Abu Yazid.

Anecdotes of Yazid "For twelve years," said Abu Yazid, "I was the blacksmith of my soul. I thrust my soul into the furnace of discipline and made it red hot in the flames of arduous endeavour, then I placed it upon the anvil of reproach and hammered it with the hammer of self-blame, till I had fashioned out of my soul a mirror. For five years I was my own mirror, and I polished that mirror with every manner of godly service and obedience. After that I gazed upon my own reflection for a year, and I saw about my waist an infidel girdle of delusion and coquetry and self-regard, because I relied upon my own acts of obedience and approved of my own conduct. For five years further I laboured till that girdle was snapped and I was a Muslim anew. I looked upon all creatures, and saw that they were dead. I said four Allahu Akbars over them, and returning from their obsequies without the jostling of God's creatures by God's succour I attained to God."

Whenever Abu Yazid arrived at the door of a mosque, he would stand a while and weep.

"Why do you do so?" he was asked. "I feel myself to be as a menstruating woman who is ashamed to enter the mosque and defile the mosque," he replied.

On one occasion Abu Yazid set out on the journey to Hejaz, but no sooner had he gone forth when he returned. "You have never failed in your purpose before," it was remarked. "Why did you do so now?" "I had just turned my face to the road," he replied, "when I saw a black man standing with a drawn sword. 'If you return, well and good. If not, I will strike your head from your body. You have left God in Bestam,' he added, 'and set out for the Holy House.'"

"A man encountered me on the road," Abu Yazid recalled. "'Where are you going?' he demanded. "'On the pilgrimage,' I replied. "'How much have you got?'" "Two hundred dirhams." "'Come, give them to me,' the man demanded. 'I am a man with a family. Circle round me seven times. That is your pilgrimage.'" "I did so, and returned home."

Pir Omar reports that when Abu Yazid wished to go into seclusion, in order to worship or to meditate, he would enter his apartment and

secure closely every aperture. "I am afraid," he would say, "that some voice or some noise may disturb me." That of course was a pretext.

Isa-ye Bestami reports, "I associated with the shaikh for thirteen years, and I never heard the shaikh utter a single word. Such was his habit; he would put his head on his knees. Occasionally he would raise his head, utter a sigh, and then return to his meditation." Sahlagi comments on the foregoing, that that was how Abu Yazid behaved when he was in that state of "contraction"; otherwise, on days when he was in the state of "expansion" everyone benefited greatly from his discourse. "On one occasion," Sahlagi continues, "as he was in seclusion he uttered the words, 'Glory be to me! How great is my dignity!' When he was himself again, his disciples told him that such words had proceeded from his tongue. 'God is your antagonist, and Abu Yazid is your antagonist,' he replied. If I speak such words again, cut me in pieces.' "And he gave each of his disciples a knife, saying, 'If such words come to me again, slay me with these knives.' "It so transpired that he spoke the same words a

second time. His disciples made to kill him. The whole apartment was filled with Abu Yazid. His companions pulled bricks out of the walls and each struck at him with his knife. The knives were as effective as if they were being struck at water; no blow had the slightest effect. After a while that form shrank, and Abu Yazid appeared as small as a sparrow, sitting in the prayerniche. His companions entered and told him what had passed. 'This is Abu Yazid whom you see now,' he remarked. 'That was not Abu Yazid.'"

Once Abu Yazid took a red apple into his hand and looked at it. "This is a beautiful apple," he said.

A voice spoke within him. "Abu Yazid, art thou not ashamed to apply My name to a fruit?" For forty days his heart was oblivious to the name of God. "I have taken an oath," the shaikh declared, "that I will never eat the fruit of Bestam so long as I live."

"One day I was seated," Abu Yazid recalled, "when the thought entered my mind, 'I am the shaikh of the time, the saint of the age.' As soon as this thought occurred to me, I knew that I had been guilty of a great error. I

rose up and proceeded on the road to Khorasan. I halted in a hospice and swore that I would not leave it until God sent me someone who should reveal me again to myself. "Three days and three nights I remained there. On the fourth day I saw a one-eyed man approaching on a camel. Observing him closely, I saw in him the marks of divine awareness. I signalled to the camel to halt, and immediately it lowered its two forelegs to the ground. The man gazed upon me. "'You bring me all this way,' he said, 'to open an eye that was closed, to unlatch a door that was locked, and to drown the people of Bestam along with Abu Yazid?' "I swooned away. 'Whence do you come?' I asked. 'Since the moment you swore that oath, I have come three thousand leagues.' Then my visitor added, 'Beware, Abu Yazid! Keep watch over your heart.' "With that he turned his face from me and departed."

Dho 'l-Nun sent Abu Yazid a prayer rug. Abu Yazid returned it to him. "What use is a prayer rug to me?" he demanded. "Send me a cushion to lean my back against!" (He implied that he had passed beyond the stage of prayer and had reached the goal.) Dho 'l-

Nun then sent him a good pillow. Abu Yazid returned that too, for by that time he had melted away and nothing was left of him but skin and bones. "He who has for a cushion," he said, "the goodness and loving kindness of God, that man has no need of the pillow of one of God's creatures."

"I once passed a night in the desert," Abu Yazid recalled. "I wrapped my head in my habit and fell asleep. Suddenly a state came upon me (he meant nocturnal emission) that required me to wash. Now the night was extremely cold, and when I awoke my soul was sluggish about washing in cold water. 'Wait till the sun comes up, then attend to this business,' my soul said. "Observing my soul's sluggishness and indifference to the requirements of religion, I arose and broke the ice with that selfsame frock and washed myself, then remained with the frock around me until I dropped and fainted. When I came to the frock had suddenly dried."

Abu Yazid often wandered about amongst the tombs. One night he was returning from the cemetery when a young nobleman approached playing a lute. "God save us," Abu Yazid exclaimed. The youth lifted the

lute and dashed it against Abu Yazid's head, breaking both his head and the lute. The youth was drunk, and did not realize whom he was striking. Abu Yazid returned to his convent and waited till morning. Then he summoned one of his companions. "What do people give for a lute?" he asked him. The companion informed him. He wrapped the sum in a cloth, added a piece of sweetmeat, and sent these to the youth. "Tell the young gentleman," he said, "that Abu Yazid asks his pardon. Say to him, 'Last night you struck me with that lute and it broke. Accept this money in compensation, and buy another. The sweetmeat is to remove from your heart the sorrow over the lute's being broken.'" When the young nobleman realized what he had done, he came to Abu Yazid and apologized. He repented, and many young men repented along with him.

One day Abu Yazid was walking with a party of disciples. The road narrowed, and just then a dog approached from the opposite direction. Abu Yazid retired, giving the dog right of way. The chance thought of disapproval occurred to one of the disciples.

"Almighty God honoured man above all other creatures. Abu Yazid is the 'king of the gnostics' yet with all this dignity, and such a following of disciples, he makes way for a dog. How can that be?" "Young man," Abu Yazid replied, "this dog mutely appealed to me, 'What shortcoming was I guilty of in the dawn of time, and what exceptional merit did you acquire, that I was clad in the skin of a dog whereas you were robed in honour as king of the gnostics?' This was the thought that came into my head, so I made way for the dog."

One day Abu Yazid was proceeding along the way when presently a dog ran alongside of him. Abu Yazid drew in his skirt. "If I am dry," said the dog, "no damage has been done. If I am wet, seven waters and earths will make peace between us. But if you draw your skirt to yourself like a Pharisee, you will not become clean, not though you bathe in seven oceans." "You are unclean outwardly," commented Abu Yazid. "I am inwardly unclean. Come, let us work together, that through our united efforts we may both become clean." "You are not fit to travel with me and be my partner," the dog replied. "For

I am rejected of all men, whereas you are accepted of men. Whoever encounters me throws a stone at me; whoever encounters you greets you as King of the Gnostics. I never store up a single bone for the morrow; you have a whole barrel of wheat for the morrow." "I am not fit to travel along with a dog," said Abu Yazid. "How then shall I travel along with the Eternal and Everlasting One? Glory be to that God, who educates the best of creatures by means of the least of creatures!" Abu Yazid continued, "A sadness invaded me, and I despaired of being an obedient servant of God. I said to myself, 'I will go to the market and buy a girdle [worn by some non- Muslims] to tie round my middle, that my reputation may vanish from among men.' So I went searching for a girdle. I saw a shop with a girdle hanging. 'They will give me this for only one dirham,' I told myself. Then I said, 'How much will you give this for?' 'A thousand dinars,' said the shopkeeper. I cast my head down. Then I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Did you not realize that they will not give for less than a thousand dinars a girdle for binding round the waist of such a man as you?' My

heart rejoiced, for I then knew that God cares for His servant."

One night Abu Yazid dreamed that the angels of the first heaven descended. "Rise up," they said to him, "let us commemorate God." "I have not the tongue to commemorate Him," he replied. The angels of the second heaven descended and said the same words, and his answer was the same. So it continued till the angels of the seventh heaven descended; to them he gave the same reply. "Well, when will you have the tongue to commemorate God?" they asked. "When the inhabitants of Hell are fixed in Hell, and the inhabitants of Paradise take their place in Paradise, and the resurrection is past, then," said he, "Abu Yazid will go around the throne of God and will cry Allah, Allah!"

In Abu Yazid's neighbourhood there lived a Zoroastrian. He had a child, and this child used to weep because they had no lamp. Abu Yazid with his own hand brought a lamp to their house. The child was hushed at once.

"Since Abu Yazid's light has entered," they said, "it would be a pity for us to continue in

our own darkness." They became Muslims forthwith.

One night Abu Yazid could find no joy in worship. "Look and see if there is anything of value in the house," he said. His disciples looked, and discovered half a bunch of grapes. "Fetch them and give them away," Abu Yazid commanded. "My house is not a fruiterer's shop." And he rediscovered his composure.

One day a man reported to Abu Yazid, "In Tabarestan a certain man had passed away. I saw you there with Khezr, peace be upon him; he had laid his hand on your neck, and your hand rested on his back. When the mourners returned from the funeral, I saw you soar into the air." "Yes," said Abu Yazid. "What you say is perfectly true."

A man who did not believe in Abu Yazid came to him one day to put him to the test. "Reveal to me the answer to such-and-such a problem," he said.

Abu Yazid perceived the unbelief within him. "In a certain mountain there is a cave," he told him. "In that cave lives one of my friends. Ask him to reveal the answer to you."

The man hastily proceeded to the cave. There he saw a huge and terrible dragon. As soon as his eyes fell upon it he fainted away, and fouled his clothes. When he recovered he flung himself out of that place, leaving his shoes behind. So he returned to Abu Yazid. Falling at his feet, he repented. "Glory be to God!" Abu Yazid exclaimed. "You cannot look after your shoes out of fear for a creature. Being in awe of God, how can you look after the 'revelation' which you came seeking in your disbelief?"

One day a man entered and questioned Abu Yazid on the topic of shame. Abu Yazid answered him, and the man turned to water. Another entered just then and perceived a pool of pale water. "Master, what is this?" he asked. "A man entered and questioned me about shame," Abu Yazid replied. "I answered him. He could not endure what I said, and so turned into water out of shame."

Hatem the Deaf said to his disciples, "Whosoever of you on the day of resurrection does not intercede for the inhabitants of Hell, he is not one of my disciples." This statement was reported to Abu Yazid. "I say," declared Abu Yazid, "that he is my disciple who stands

on the brink of Hell and takes by the hand every one being conveyed to Hell and dispatches him to Heaven, and then enters Hell in his place."

Once the army of Islam flagged in the war against Byzantium, and was near to being defeated. Suddenly they heard a shout, "Abu Yazid, give help!" At once he came from the direction of Khorasan, so that fear fell upon the army of the infidels and the army of Islam won the day.

Abu Yazid was asked, "How did you attain to this degree and achieve this station?" "One night when I was a child," he answered, "I came out from Bestam. The moon was shining, and the world was at rest. I beheld a Presence, besides which eighteen thousand worlds seemed but a mote. A deep emotion possessed me and I was overmastered by a mighty ecstasy. 'Lord God,' I cried, 'so mighty a palace, and so empty! Works so tremendous, and such loneliness!' A voice from heaven replied, 'The palace is not empty because none comes to it; it is empty because We do not desire all and sundry to enter it.'

Not every unwashed of face is worthy to inhabit this palace.' "I made the resolve to pray for all creatures. Then the thought came to me, 'The station of intercession belongs to Mohammad, upon him be peace.' So I observed my manners I heard a voice address me, 'Because of this one observance of good manners I have exalted your name, so that until the resurrection men shall call you King of the Gnostics.'"

"The first time I entered the Holy House," stated Abu Yazid, "I saw the Holy House. The second time I entered it, I saw the Lord of the House. The third time I saw neither the House nor the Lord of the House." By this Abu Yazid meant, "I became lost in God, so that I knew nothing. Had I seen at all, I would have seen God." Proof of this interpretation is given by the following anecdote. A man came to the door of Abu Yazid and called out. "Whom are you seeking?" asked Abu Yazid. "Abu Yazid," replied the man. "Poor wretch!" said Abu Yazid. "I have been seeking Abu Yazid for thirty years, and cannot find any trace or token of him." This remark was reported to Dho 'l-Nun. He commented, "God have mercy on my brother Abu Yazid!"

He is lost with the company of those that are lost in God."

So complete was Abu Yazid's absorption in God, that every day when he was called by a disciple who had been his inseparable companion for twenty years, he would say, "My son, what is your name?" "Master," the disciple said one day, "you ate mocking me. For twenty years now I have been serving you, and every day you ask me my name."

"My son," replied Abu Yazid, "I do not deride you. But His name has entered my heart, and has expelled all other names. As soon as I learn a new name, I promptly forget it."

"Almighty God," said Abu Yazid, "admitted me to His presence in two thousand stations, and in every station He offered me a kingdom, but I declined it. God said to me, 'Abu Yazid, what do you desire?' I replied, 'I desire not to desire.'" "You walk on the water!" they said. "So does a piece of wood," Abu Yazid replied. "You fly in the air!" "So does a bird." "You travel to the Kaaba in a single night!" "Any conjurer travels from India to Demavand in a single night."

"Then what is the proper task of true men?" they asked. "The true man attaches his heart to none but God," he replied.

"I triply divorced the world," said Abu Yazid, "and alone proceeded to the Alone. I stood before the Presence and cried, 'Lord God, I desire none but Thee. If I possess Thee, I possess all.' "When God recognized my sincerity, the first grace that He accorded me was that he removed the chaff of the self from before me."

"What is the Throne?" Abu Yazid was asked. "It is I," he replied. "What is the Footstool?" "I." "What is the Tablet and the Pen?" "I." "God has servants the like of Abraham and Moses and Jesus." "All are I." "God has servants the like of Gabriel and Michael and Seraphiel." "All are I." The man was silent.

"Whoever has become effaced in God," said Abu Yazid, "and has attained the Reality of all that is, all is God."

It is related that Abu Yazid seventy times attained propinquity to the presence of the Almighty. Each time he returned, he bound a girdle about him and then broke it. When his life drew towards its close, he entered the

prayer niche and bound a girdle about him. He put on upside down his fur jacket and his cap. Then he said, "O God, I do not vaunt of the discipline of a whole lifetime. I do not parade my all night prayers. I do not speak of my fasting all my life. I do not enumerate the times I have recited the Koran. I do not tell of my spiritual occasions and litanies and proximities. Thou knowest that I do not look back on anything, and that this of which I give account by my tongue is not said in boasting, or because I rely thereon. I give account of all this, because I am ashamed of all that I have done. Thou hast invested me with the grace of seeing myself so. All that is nothing; count it as naught. I am an old Torkoman of seventy years whose hair has grown white in pagandom. Now I come from the desert crying Tangri Tangri. Only now I learn to say Allah Allah. Only now I break my girdle. Only now I set foot in the circle of Islam. Only now I make my tongue move with the attestation of the Faith. All that Thou doest is without cause; Thou acceptest not on account of obedience, and Thou rejectest not on account of disobedience. All that I have done I reckon as but dust. Whatsoever Thou

hast seen of me not pleasing to Thy presence,
do Thou draw the line of pardon through it.
And wash the dust of disobedience from me;
for I have myself washed away the dust of the
presumption that I have obeyed Thee.”
(Translated by A.J.Arberry)

8. Ma'ruf al-Karkhi

Abu Mahfuz Ma'ruf ibn Firuz al-Karkhi is said to have been born of Christian parents; the story of his conversion to Islam by the Shi'ite imam 'Ali ibn Musaal-Reza is generally discredited. A prominent mystic of the Baghdad school, he died in 200 (815).

How Ma'ruf-e Karkhi chose Islam Ma'ruf-e Karkhi's mother and father were both Christians. When they sent him to school, his master said to him, “Say, God is the third of three.” “No,” answered Ma'ruf. “On the contrary, He is God, the One.” The teacher beat him, but to no avail. One day the schoolmaster beat him severely, and Ma'ruf ran away and could not be found. “If only he would come back,” his mother and father

said. "Whichever religion he wished to follow, we would agree with him." Ma'ruf came to Ali ibn Musa al-Reza and accepted Islam at his hands. Some time passed. Then one day he made his way home and knocked at the door of his father's house. "Who is there?" they asked. "Ma'ruf," he replied.

"What faith have you adopted?" "The religion of Mohammad, the Messenger of God." His mother and father immediately became Muslims.

After that Ma'ruf fell in with Dawud-e Ta'i and underwent a severe discipline. He proved himself so devout and practised such austerities that the fame of his steadfastness was noised abroad. Mohammad ibn Mansur al-Tusi relates that he encountered Ma'ruf in Baghdad. "I observed a scar on his face. I said to him, 'I was with you yesterday and did not notice this mark then. What is it?' 'Do not ask about things that do not concern you,' he replied. 'Ask only about matters that are profitable to you.' 'By the right of Him we worship,' I pleaded, 'tell me.' "Then he said, 'Last night I was praying, and I wished that I might go to Mecca and circumambulate the Kaaba. I approached the well of Zemzem to

take a drink of water. My foot slipped, and my face struck the well. That was how I got this scar.””

Once Ma’ruf went down to the Tigris to make his ablutions, leaving his Koran and prayer rug in the mosque. An old woman stole in and took them, and went off with them. Ma’ruf ran after her. When he caught up with her he addressed her, lowering his head so that his eyes might not fall on her. “Have you a son who can chant the Koran?” “No,” she replied. “Then give me back the Koran. You can have the prayer rug.” The woman was amazed at his clemency, and set down both the Koran and the prayer rug. “No, take the prayer rug,” repeated Ma’ruf. “It is lawfully yours.” The woman hastened away in shame and confusion.

Anecdotes of Ma’ruf One day Ma’ruf was walking along with a group of his followers when a gang of youths came that way. They behaved outrageously all the way to the Tigris. “Master,” Ma’ruf’s companions entreated him, “pray to Almighty God to drown them all, that the world may be rid of their foul presence.” “Lift up your hands,” Ma’ruf bade them. Then he prayed. “O God,

as Thou hast given them a happy life in this world, even so grant them a happy life in the world to come." "Master, we know not the secret of this prayer," said his companions in astonishment.

"He with whom I am speaking knows the secret," Ma'ruf replied. "Wait a moment. Even now this secret will be revealed." When the youths beheld the shaikh, they broke their lutes and poured away the wine they were drinking. Trembling overcame them, and they fell before the shaikh and repented. "You see," Ma'ruf remarked to his companions. "Your desire has been fulfilled completely, without drowning and without anyone suffering."

Sari-e Saqati relates the following story. One festival day I saw Ma'ruf picking date stones. "What are you doing?" I asked him. "I saw this child weeping," he told me. "I said, 'Why are you crying?' He told me, 'I am an orphan. I have no father and no mother. The other children have new clothes, and I have none. They have nuts, and I have none.' So I am gathering these stones to sell them and buy him nuts, then he may run along and play."

"Let me attend to this and spare you the care," I said. Sari went on, "I took the child and clothed him, and bought him nuts, and made him happy. Immediately I saw a great light shine in my heart, and I was transformed."

Ma'ruf had an uncle who was governor of the city. One day he was passing some wasteland when he observed Ma'ruf sitting there eating bread. Before him there was a dog, and Ma'ruf was putting one morsel in his own mouth and then one in the dog's. "Are you not ashamed to eat bread with a dog?" cried his uncle. "It is out of shame that I am giving bread to the poor," replied Ma'ruf. Then he raised his head and called to a bird in the air. The bird flew down and perched on his hand, covering his head and eyes with his wings. "Whosoever is ashamed before God," said Ma'ruf, "every thing is ashamed before him." At once his uncle was filled with confusion. One day Ma'ruf broke his ritual purity. Immediately he made ablution in sand. "Why look," they said to him. "Here is the Tigris. Why are you making ablution in the sand?"

"It can be," he replied, "that I may be no more by the time I reach it."

A crowd of Shi'ites were jostling one day at the door of Reza, and they broke Ma'ruf-e Karkhi's ribs, so that he fell seriously ill.

Sari-e Saqati said to him, "Give me your last testament." "When I die," said Ma'ruf, "take my shirt and give it in alms. I desire to go out of this world naked, even as I came naked from my mother's womb." When he died, so great was the fame of his humanity and humility that men of all religions, Jews, Christians and Muslims alike, claimed him as one of them. His servant reported that Ma'ruf had said, "Whoever is able to lift my bier from the ground, I am of that people." The Christians were unable. The Jews were likewise unable to lift it. Then the Muslims came and lifted it. They prayed over him, and in that very place they committed him to the ground.

Sari reported the following. After Ma'ruf died I saw him in a dream. He was standing beneath the Throne with his eyes wide open, like one stupefied and distraught. A cry came from God to the angels. "Who is this?" "Lord God, Thou knowest best," the angels

answered. "It is Ma'ruf," came the Command. "He has become dazzled and stupefied by reason of Our love. Only by seeing Us will he come to his senses. Only by meeting Us will he rediscover himself" (**Translated by A.J.Arberry**)

9.Sari al-Saqati

Abo '1-Hasan Sari ibn al-Moghalles al-Saqati, said to be a pupil of Ma'ruf al-Karkhi, uncle of al-Jonaid, was a prominent figure in the Baghdad circle of Sufis and attracted the opposition of Ahmad ibn Hanbal. A dealer in secondhand goods, he died in 253 (867) at the age of 98.

The career of Sari-e Saqati Sari-e Saqati was the first man to preach in Baghdad on the mystic truths and the Suh "unity". Most of the Sufi shaikhs of Iraq were his disciples. He was the uncle of Jonaid and the pupil of Ma'ruf-e Karkhi; he had also seen Habib-e Ra'i. To begin with he lived in Baghdad, where he had a shop. Hanging a curtain over the door of his shop, he would go in and pray, performing several rak'as daily in this

fashion. One day a man came from Mount Lokam to visit him. Lifting aside the curtain, he greeted him. "Shaikh So-and-so from Mount Lokam greets you," he said. "He dwells in the mountains," commented Sari. "So his efforts amount to nothing. A man ought to be able to live in the midst of the market and be so preoccupied with God, that not for a single instant is he absent from God." It is said that in his transactions he never looked for a greater profit than five per cent. Once he bought almonds for sixty dinars. Almonds then became scarce. A broker called on him. "Sell then," said Sari. "For how much?" the broker asked. "Sixty-six dinars." "But the price of almonds today is ninety dinars," the broker objected. "It is my rule not to take more than five per cent," Sari replied. "I will not break my rule." "I also do not think it right to sell your goods for less," said the broker. So the broker did not sell, and Sari made no concession.

To start with Sari used to sell odds and ends. One day the bazaars of Baghdad caught fire. "The bazaars are on fire," they told him. "Then I have also become free," he remarked.

Afterwards an inspection was made and it was found that Sari's shop had not been burned. When he saw that, he gave all that he possessed to the poor and took up the Sufi way.

"What was the beginning of your spiritual career?" he was asked. "One day," he said, "Habib-e Ra'i passed by my shop. I gave him something to give to the poor. 'God be good to you,' he replied. The day he intoned that prayer the world lost its attraction for me. "The following day Ma'ruf-e Karkhi came along bringing an orphan child. 'Clothe this child,' he begged me. I clothed the child. 'May God make the world hateful to your heart, and give you rest from this work,' he cried. I gave up worldly things completely, thanks to the blessing of Ma'ruf's prayer."

Sari and the courtier One day Sari was preaching. Now one of the caliph's booncompanions called Ahmad-e Yazid the Scribe came along in all his finery, surrounded by a crowd of servants and slaves. "Wait while I listen to this fellow's sermon," he said. "We have been to a good few places where we should not have gone. I

have had my fill of them." He entered and sat down in Sari's audience. "In all eighteen thousand worlds," Sari was saying, "there is nothing weaker than man. Yet of all the species that God has created, none is so disobedient to God's command as man. If he is good, he is so good that the very angels envy his estate; if he is bad, he is so bad that the Devil himself is ashamed to associate with him. What a marvellous thing is man, so weak, yet he disobeys God who is so mighty!" These words were as an arrow sped from Sari's bow into Ahmad's soul. He wept so bitterly that he fainted. Then weeping he arose and returned to his home. That night he ate nothing and uttered not a word. The next day he came on foot to Sari's assembly, anxious and pale of cheek. When the meeting ended, he went home. On the third day he came again, alone and on foot. At the close of the assembly he came up to Sari. "Master," he said, "your words have taken hold of me and made the world loathsome to my heart. I want to give up the world and retire from the society of men. Expound to me the way of the Travellers." "Which path do you want?" Sari asked him. "That of the Way, or that of the

Law? That of the multitude, or that of the elect?" "Expound both," the courtier requested. "The way of the multitude is this," said Sari, "that you observe prayer five times daily behind the imam, and that you give alms—if it be in money, half a dinar out of every twenty. The way of the elect is this, that you thrust the world behind you altogether and do not concern yourself with any of its trappings; if you are 220 sari al-saqati

offered it, you will not accept it. These are the two ways." The courtier went out and set his face towards the wilderness. Some days later an old woman with matted hair and scratches on her cheeks came to Sari. "Imam of the Muslims, I had a son, young and fresh of countenance," she said. "One day he came to your assembly laughing and strutting, and returned weeping and wailing. Now it is some days since he has vanished, and I do not know where he is. My heart is burning because he is parted from me. Please do something for me." Her desperate pleading moved Sari to compassion. "Do not grieve," he told her. "Only good will ensue. When he comes back, I will inform you. He has

abandoned the world and turned his back on the worldlings. He has become a true penitent." After a space, one night Ahmad reappeared. "Go, tell the old lady," Sari bade his servant. Then he looked upon Ahmad. His cheeks were pale, he was wasted, the tall cypress of his stature was bent double. "Kindly master," he cried, "forasmuch as you have guided me to peace and delivered me out of darkness, now may God give you peace and bestow upon you joy in both worlds." They were thus conversing when Ahmad's mother and his wife entered, bringing his little son. When his mother's eyes fell upon Ahmad and she saw him in a state she had never seen before, she cast herself upon his breast. His wife too stood on one side of him wailing, whilst his son wept on the other. A hubbub went up from them all, and Sari too burst into tears. The child flung himself at his father's feet. But despite all their efforts to persuade him to return home, it was all to no effect. "Imam of the Muslims," Ahmad protested, "why did you tell them? They will be my undoing." "Your mother entreated me over and over, so at last I consented to tell her," Sari replied. Ahmad prepared to return

to the desert. "While still alive, you have made me a widow and your child an orphan," cried his wife. "When he asks for you, what am I to do? There is no other way. You must take the boy with you." "I will do that," Akmad answered. He stripped him of his fine clothes and flung a strip of goat's wool over him. He put a wallet in his hand. "Now be on your way," he said. "I cannot stand this," cried his wife when she saw the child in that state. She snatched the boy to her. "I give you charge of myself too," said Ahmad. "If you so desire, set me free." Then Ahmad returned to the wilderness. Some years went by. Then one night, at the time of the prayer of sleeping, a man came to Sari's hospice.

"Ahmad sent me," he said, entering. "He says, 'My affairs have come to a critical pass. Help me.' " Sari went out. He found Ahmad lying on the ground in a sepulchre, on the point of expiring. His tongue was still moving. Sari listened. Ahmad was saying, "For the like of this let the workers work." Sari raised his head from the dust, wiped it, and laid it on his breast. Ahmad opened his eyes and saw the shaikh. "Master, you have come in time," he cried. "My affairs have

come to a critical pass." Then he ceased to breathe. Weeping, Sari set out for the city to arrange his affairs. He saw a multitude coming forth from the city. "Where are you going?" he asked. "Do you not know?" they replied. "Last night a voice was heard from Heaven proclaiming, 'Whoever desires to pray over an elect friend of God, say, Go to the cemetery of Shuniziya.'"

Anecdotes of Sari Jonaid reported the following. One day when I visited Sari I found him in tears. "What happened?" I asked. "The thought occurred to me," he replied, "that tonight I would hang out a jar for the water to cool. In a dream I saw a houri who told me, when I asked her who she belonged to, 'I belong to the man who does not hang out a jar for the water to get cool.' The houri then dashed my jar to the ground. See there!" I saw the broken shards. For a long time the pieces still lay there.

The following was also reported by Jonaid. One night I had been sleeping peacefully, and when I awoke my secret soul insisted that I should go to the mosque of Shuniziya. I went there, and saw by the mosque a person of terrible mien. I was afraid. "Jonaid, are you

afraid of me?" he asked. "Yes," I replied. "If you knew God as He should be known," he said, "you would fear none but Him." "Who are you?" I demanded. "Iblis," he answered. "I wanted to see you," I told him. "The moment you thought of me, you forgot God without being aware of it," he said. "What was your object in wanting to see me?" "I wanted to ask whether you had any power over the poor," I told him. "No," he answered. "Why is that?" I asked. "When I want to trap them with worldly things, they flee to the next world," he said. "And when I want to trap them with the next world, they flee to the Lord, and there I cannot follow them." "If you cannot master them, then do you see them?" I enquired. "I see them," he answered. "When they are at concert and in ecstasy, I see the source of their lamentation." With that he vanished. I entered the mosque, to find Sari there with his head on his knees. "He lies, that enemy of God," he said, raising his head. "They are too precious for Him to show them to Iblis."

Sari had a sister. She asked for permission to sweep his apartment, but he refused her. "My life is not worthy of this," he told her. One

day she entered and saw an old woman sweeping out his room. "Brother, you did not give me permission to wait upon you. Now you have brought one not of your kindred." "Sister, let not your heart be troubled," Sari replied. "This is this lower world. She fell in love with me, and was denied me. So now she asked permission of Almighty God to be a part of my life. She has been given the task of sweeping my chamber." (**By A.J.Arberry**)

10. Abo 'l-Qasem al-Jonaid ibn Muhammad

Al-Khazzaz al-Nehawandi, son of a glass-merchant and nephew of Sari al-Saqati, close associate of al-Mohasebi, was the greatest exponent of the 'sober' school of Sufism and elaborated a theosophical doctrine which determined the whole course of orthodox mysticism in Islam. He expounded his theories in his teachings, and in a series of letters written to various contemporaries which have survived. The head of a large and

influential school, he died in Baghdad in 298 (910).

The early years of Jonaid-e Baghdadi From childhood Jonaid was given to spiritual sorrow, and was an earnest seeker after God, well disciplined, thoughtful and quick of understanding and of a penetrating intuition. One day he returned home from school to find his father in tears. "What happened?" he enquired. "I took something by way of alms to your uncle Sari," his father told him. "He would not accept it. I am weeping because I have given my whole life to save these five dirhams, and then this offering is not meet for one of the friends of God to receive." "Give me the money, and I will give it to him. That way he may take it," said Jonaid. His father gave him the dirhams, and Jonaid went off. Coming to his uncle's house, he knocked at the door. "Who is that?" came a voice. "Jonaid," answered the boy. "Open the door and take this due offering of alms." "I will not take it," cried Sari. "I beg you to take it, by the God who has dealt so graciously with you and so justly with my father," cried Jonaid. "Jonaid, how did God deal graciously with me and justly with him?"

demanded Sari. "God was gracious to you," Jonaid replied, "in vouchsafing you poverty. To my father God was just in occupying him with worldly affairs. You are at liberty to accept or reject as you please. He, whether he likes it or not, must convey the due alms on his possessions to the one deserving of it." This answer pleased Sari. "Child, before I accept these alms, I have accepted you." So saying, Sari opened the door and took the alms. He assigned to Jonaid a special place in his heart.

Jonaid was only seven years old when Sari took him on the pilgrimage. In the Mosque of the Sanctuary the question of thankfulness was being discussed by four hundred shaikhs. Each shaikh expounded his own view. "You also say something," Sari prompted Jonaid. "Thankfulness," said Jonaid, "means that you should not disobey God by means of the favour which He has bestowed on you, nor make of His favour a source of disobedience." "Well said, O consolation of true believers," cried the four hundred. They were unanimous that a better definition could not be devised. "Boy," said Sari, "it will soon come to pass that your special gift from God will be your

tongue." Jonaid wept when he heard his uncle say this. "Where did you acquire this?" Sari demanded. "From sitting with you," Jonaid replied.

Jonaid then returned to Baghdad, and took up selling glasses. Every day he would go to the shop and draw down the blind and perform four hundred rak'as. After a time he abandoned the shop and withdrew to a room in the porch of Sari's house, where he busied himself with the guardianship of his heart. He unrolled the prayer rug of meticulous watchfulness, that no thought of anything but God should pass through his mind.

Jonaid put to the proof For forty years Jonaid persevered in his mystic course. For thirty years he would perform the prayer before sleeping, then stand on his feet repeating "Allah" until dawn, saying the dawn prayer with the ablution he had made the previous night. "After forty years had gone by," he said, "the conceit arose in me that I had attained my goal. Immediately a voice out of Heaven spoke to me. 'Jonaid,' the voice cried, 'the time has come for Me to show you the loop of your Magian girdle.' When I heard

these words I exclaimed, ‘O God, what sin has Jonaid committed?’ ‘Do you look for a more grievous sin than this,’ the voice replied, ‘that you exist?’ “Jonaid sighed and lowered his head. “He who is not worthy of union,” he murmured, “all his good works are but sins.” He continued to sit in his room, crying “Allah, Allah” all night. The long tongues of slander were shot out against him, and his conduct was reported to the caliph. “He cannot be inhibited without any proof,” said the caliph. “Many people are being seduced by his words,” they stated. Now the caliph possessed a handmaiden of unrivalled beauty. He had purchased her for three thousand

dinars, and loved her dearly. The caliph commanded that she should be arrayed in fine raiment and precious jewels. “Go to such a place,” she was instructed. “Stand before Jonaid and unveil your face, and display your jewels and raiment to him. Say to him, ‘I am possessed of much wealth, and my heart has grown weary of worldly affairs. I have come so that you may propose to me, that in your society I may devote myself to the service of God. My heart finds repose in no one but

you.' Display yourself to him. Unveil, and strive your utmost to persuade him." She was despatched to Jonaid with a servant. The handmaiden came before Jonaid and carried out her instructions to the letter and more. Involuntarily Jonaid's glance fell upon her. He remained silent and made no answer. She repeated her story. Jonaid hung his head; then he raised his head. "Ah," he exclaimed, and breathed on the girl. The girl immediately fell to the ground and expired. The servant who had accompanied returned to the caliph and reported what had transpired. Fire fell upon the caliph's soul, and he repented of what he had done. "He who acts towards others as he should not, sees what he ought not to see," he observed. Rising up, he proceeded to call on Jonaid.

"Such a man one cannot summon to attend on oneself," he commented. "O master, how did your heart allow it," asked the caliph, "to consume so fair a form?" "Prince of the Believers," Jonaid replied, "your compassion for the faithful was so great, that you desired to cast to the winds my forty years of discipline, of keeping vigil and self mortification. Yet who am I in all this? Do

not, that you may not be done to!" After that Jonaid's affairs prospered. His fame reached to all parts of the world. However much he was persecuted, his repute increased a thousandfold. He began to preach. As he explained once, "I did not preach to the public until thirty of the great saints indicated to me that it was proper for me to call men to God." "For thirty years I sat watching over my heart," he said. "Then for ten years my heart watched over me. Now it is twenty years that I know nothing of my heart and my heart knows nothing of me." "For thirty years," he said again, "God has spoken with Jonaid by the tongue of Jonaid, Jonaid not being there at all, and men were not aware."

Jonaid preaches When Jonaid's tongue was loosened to utter great words, Sari-e Saqati urged him that it was his duty to preach in public. Jonaid was hesitant, not desiring to do so. "While the master is there, it is not seemly for the disciple to preach," he demurred. Then one night Jonaid saw the Prophet in a dream. "Preach," the Prophet said. Next morning he arose to go and report to Sari, but he found Sari standing at the

door. "Hitherto," Sari told him, "you were inhibited, waiting for others to tell you to preach. Now you must speak, because your words have been made the means of a whole world's salvation. You would not speak when the disciples asked you to. You did not speak when the shaikhs of Baghdad interceded with you. You did not speak at my urging. Now that the Prophet has commanded you, you must speak." "God forgive me," Jonaid replied. "How did you know that I saw the Prophet in a dream?" "I saw God in a dream," Sari explained. "God said, 'I have sent the Messenger to tell Jonaid to preach from the pulpit.'" "I will preach then," consented Jonaid. "Only on one condition, that it be to no more than forty persons." One day Jonaid was preaching, and forty persons were present. Of these eighteen expired, and twentytwo fell to the ground unconscious. They were lifted up and carried to their homes.

Another day Jonaid was preaching in the cathedral. In the congregation there was a Christian lad, but no one knew that he was a Christian. He approached Jonaid and said, "According to the Prophet's saying, 'Beware

of the insight of the believer, for he sees by the light of God.' " "The pronouncement is," replied Jonaid, "that you should become a Muslim and cut your Christian girdle, for this is the time of Muslimdom." The boy immediately became a Muslim. After Jonaid had preached a number of times, the people cried out against him. He gave up preaching, and retired to his room. For all that he was urged to resume, he would not do so. "I am content," he replied. 'I cannot contrive my own destruction.' Some time later he mounted the pulpit and began to preach without any prompting. "What was the inner wisdom in this?" he was asked. "I came upon a Tradition," he replied, "according to which the Prophet said, 'In the last days the spokesman of the people will be he that is the worst of them. He will preach to them.' I know that I am the worst of the people. I am preaching because of what the Prophet said, so that I may not oppose his words."

Anecdotes of Jonaid Once Jonaid's eye pained him, and he sent for the doctor. "If your eye is throbbing, do not let any water get to it," the doctor advised. When he had gone, Jonaid performed his ablutions and prayed, and then

went to sleep. When he awoke, his eye was well again. He heard a voice saying, "Jonaid forsook his eye to gain Our good pleasure. If with the same intention he had begged of Us all the inhabitants of Hell, his petition would have been granted." The physician called and saw that his eye was healed. "What did you do?" he asked. "I performed the ablutions for prayer," Jonaid answered. Thereupon the physician, who was a Christian, declared his conversion. "This is the Creator's cure, not the creature's," he commented. 'It was my eye that was sick, not yours. You were the physician, not I."

"Once," said Jonaid, "I desired to see Iblis. I was standing at the mosque door, when I espied an old man approaching from afar. As I looked at him, a horror rose within me.

"Who are you?" I demanded. "Your desire," he replied. "Accursed one," I cried, "what thing held you back from prostrating to Adam?" "How do you imagine, Jonaid," Iblis replied, "that I would prostrate to any but Him?" Jonaid described his sense of bewilderment, hearing the Devil say these words. "A voice addressed me in my secret

heart," he recalled. "The voice said, 'Say, You are a liar. If you had been a true servant, you would have obeyed His command. You would never have disregarded it and flirted with denial.' " When Iblis heard this speech, he uttered a loud cry. "By Allah, Jonaid, you have destroyed me!" And he vanished.

"In these days brothers in the faith have become few and far to find," a man said in Jonaid's presence. "If you are looking for someone to bear your burden, such men are indeed few and far to find," Jonaid countered. "But if you are seeking to carry somebody's load, such brothers are to be found in plenty with me."

Whenever Jonaid spoke on the Divine Unity, every time he began with a different expression which no one could understand. One day Shebli was in Jonaid's audience and uttered the word Allah.

If God is absent, to mention the absent One is a sign of absence, and absence is a thing proscribed," Jonaid said. "If God is present, to mention His name while contemplating Him present is a mark of irreverence."

A man brought five hundred dinars and offered them to Jonaid. "Do you possess

anything besides this?" Jonaid asked him. "Yes, a lot," the man replied. "Do you need more?" "Yes, I do." "Then take it away," Jonaid said. "You have a better right to it. I possess nothing, and I need nothing."

A man rose up where Jonaid was preaching and began to beg. "This man is perfectly healthy," thought Jonaid. "He can earn his living. Why does he beg, and impose on himself this humiliation?" That night Jonaid dreamed that a covered dish was set before him. "Eat," he was bidden. When he lifted the lid, he saw the man who had begged lying dead on the dish. "I do not eat the flesh of men," he protested. "Then why did you do so in mosque yesterday?" he was asked.

Jonaid realized that he had been guilty of slander in his heart, and that he was being taken to task for an evil thought. "I woke in terror," Jonaid recollects. "I purified myself and said two rak'as, then I went out to search for the beggar. I saw him on the bank of the Tigris, picking out of the water scraps of vegetables people had washed there and eating them. Raising his head, he saw me approaching and addressed me. 'Jonaid,' he

said, ‘have you repented of the thoughts you had concerning me?’ ‘I have,’ I replied. ‘Then go. It is He Who accepts repentance from His servants. This time keep a watch over your thoughts.’”

“I learned sincere belief from a barber,” Jonaid recalled, and he told the following story. Once when I was in Mecca, a barber was trimming a gentleman’s hair. I said to him, “For the sake of God, can you shave my hair?” “I can,” he said. His eyes filling with tears, he left the gentleman still unfinished. “Get up,” he said. “When God’s name is spoken, everything else must wait.” He seated me and kissed my head, and shaved off my hair. Then he gave me a screw of paper with a few small coins in it. “Spend this on your needs,” he said.

I thereupon resolved that the first present that came my way I would give him in charity. Not long afterwards a bag of gold arrived from Basra. I took it to the barber. “What is this?” he asked. “I made up my mind,” I explained, “that the first present that came my way I must give to you. This has just arrived.” “Man,” he exclaimed, “have you no

shame before God? You said to me, 'For the sake of God, shave my hair.' Then you give me a present. Have you ever known of anyone doing a deed for the sake of God and taking payment for it?"

A thief had been hanged in Baghdad. Jonaid went and kissed his feet. "Why did you do that?" he was asked. "A thousand compassions be upon him!" he replied. "He proved himself a true man at his trade. He did his work so perfectly, that he gave his life for it."

One night a thief entered Jonaid's room. Finding nothing there but a shirt, he took that and fled. Next day Jonaid was passing through the bazaars when he saw his shirt in the hands of a broker who was selling it to a customer.

"I require an acquaintance who will testify that it is your property, before I buy it," the prospective purchaser said. "I am ready to testify that it belongs to him," said Jonaid, stepping forward. The man then bought the shirt.

An old woman came to Jonaid and said, "My son is missing. Say a prayer that he may

return." "Be patient," Jonaid told her. The woman waited patiently for several days. Then she returned. "Be patient," Jonaid repeated. This happened several times. At last the old woman came and announced, "My patience is exhausted. Pray to God." "If you speak the truth," said Jonaid, "your son has returned. God says, He who answers the constrained, when he calls unto Him." Jonaid then offered up a prayer. When the woman returned to her house, her son had come.

A disciple formed the notion that he had attained the degree of perfection. "It is better for me to be alone," he thought. So he withdrew into a corner and sat there for a space. It so fell out that every night he was brought a camel and told, "We will convey you to Paradise."

He would sit on the camel and ride until he arrived at a pleasant and cheerful spot thronged with handsome folk and abounding in choice dishes and running water. There he would remain till dawn; then he would fall asleep, and awake to find himself in his cell. He now became proud and very conceited. "Every night I am taken to Paradise," he would boast. His words came to Jonaid's ears.

He at once arose and proceeded to his cell, where he found him putting on the greatest airs. He asked him what had happened, and he told the whole story to the shaikh. "Tonight when you are taken there," Jonaid told him, "say thrice, 'There is no strength nor power save with God, the Sublime, the Almighty.' " That night the disciple was transported as usual. He disbelieved in his heart what the shaikh had told him, nevertheless, when he reached that place he uttered as an experiment, "There is no strength nor power." The company all screamed and fled, and he found himself on a dunghill with bones lying before him. Realizing his error, he repented and repaired to Jonaid's circle. He had learned that for a disciple to dwell alone is mortal poison.

A disciple of Jonaid's was dwelling in seclusion in Basra. One night a sinful thought entered his mind. He looked in a mirror and saw that his face had turned black. Stupefied, he tried every device he could think of, but in vain. He was so ashamed that he showed his face to no one. Three days went by, then the blackness gradually grew less. Unexpectedly a knock

came on his door. "Who is it?" the disciple asked. "] have come with a letter from Jonaid," said the caller. The disciple read the letter. "Why do you not conduct yourself becomingly in the presence of Glory? For three days and nights I have had to work as a fuller, to change your face from black to white."

There was a certain disciple of Jonaid's who was taken to task one day over a small matter. Shamefaced, he fled and came no more to the convent. Several days later Jonaid was passing through the market with his companions when he suddenly espied that disciple. The disciple in shame took to his heels. "A bird of ours has flown from the snare," said Jonaid, turning back his companions, and following on the disciple's heels. Looking back, the disciple saw the shaikh coming, so he quickened his pace. Presently he reached a place where there was no exit, and in shame he turned his face to the wall. Presently the shaikh appeared on the scene. "Where are you making for, master?" the disciple asked. "When a disciple is up against the wall, there the shaikh can be of use," replied Jonaid. He

then led the disciple back to the convent. The disciple fell at his feet and begged God's forgiveness. Those who witnessed the spectacle were deeply moved, and many repented.

The shaikh Jonaid had a disciple whom he loved above all the others. The other disciples were moved to jealousy, a fact which the shaikh realized by his mystic intuition. "He is superior to you in manners and understanding," he told them. "That is what I had in view; let us make an experiment, so that you may also realize it." Jonaid commanded twenty birds to be brought to him. "Each of you take one," he told his disciples. "In a place where no one can see you kill it, then bring it back." All the disciples went off and killed and brought back the birds—all, that is, except that favourite disciple. He brought his bird back alive.

"Why did you not kill it?" Jonaid asked him. "Because the master said it must be done in a place where no one can see," the disciple answered. "Wherever I went, God saw." "You see the measure of his understanding!"

Jonaid exclaimed. "Compare that with that of the others." All the other disciples begged God's forgiveness.

Jonaid had eight special disciples who carried out his every thought. One day the notion occurred to them that they must go to the holy war. Next morning Jonaid ordered his servant to make all preparations for the wars. He then set out to fight together with those eight disciples. When the lines of battle were drawn up, a champion stepped forth from the ranks of the infidels and martyred all eight. "I looked up to heaven," said Jonaid, "and I saw nine litters standing by. As each of the eight was martyred his spirit was lifted up on a litter, until one remained over empty. 'That one must be meant for me,' I thought, and I joined the battle-ranks once more. Then the champion who had slain my eight companions came up and addressed me. 'Abo'lQasem, that ninth litter is for me. You return to Baghdad, and be the shaikh of the community. Offer me Islam.'

"So he became a Muslim. With the same sword with which he had slain the eight disciples, he slew a like number of infidels.

Then he achieved martyrdom himself. His soul," Jonaid concluded, "was also placed in that litter, and all vanished."

There was a sayyid called Naseri who was on the pilgrimage intent. When he reached Baghdad he went to visit Jonaid. "Whence comes the sayyid?" Jonaid enquired when greetings had been said. "From Gilan," he replied. "Of whose sons are you?" asked Jonaid. "I am descended from Ali the Prince of the Believers, God be well pleased with him," the man answered. "Your forefather wielded two swords," said Jonaid. "One against the unbelievers, the other against himself. Now, sayyid, you who are his son, which of these two do you employ?" The sayyid wept bitterly when he heard these words and grovelled before Jonaid. "Master, my pilgrimage is here," he exclaimed. "Show me the way to God." "Your breast is the private sanctuary of God," said Jonaid. "So far as you are able, admit naught unsanctified into the private sanctuary." "That is all I want to know," said the sayyid.

The death of Jonaid When death was near at hand Jonaid bade them to lay the table and to

set out a meal. "I wish to give up the ghost whilst my companions are eating a bowl of soup." The first agony assailed him. "Give me the water of ablution," he said. By chance they forgot to let the water run between his fingers. At his behest this slip was made good, and he then proceeded to the prostration, weeping. "Chief of the Order," his disciples protested, "with all the service and obedience to God which you have sent ahead of you what time is this for prostration?" "Never was Jonaid more in need than now," he replied. Straightway he began to recite the Koran, and went on reciting. "What, you recite the Koran?" asked a disciple. "Who has the better right to than I, seeing that this hour the scroll of my life will be rolled up, and I shall see my seventy years' obedience and service suspended in the air by a single thread? Then a wind will come and swing it to and fro, so that I shall not know whether it is a wind bringing separation or union. On one side of me will stretch the causeway between Heaven and Hell and on the other side the Angel of Death. The Judge whose attribute is justice will be 286 abo 'l-qasem al-jonaid

there awaiting me, unwavering in perfect equity." Jonaid continued, "A road has been laid before me, and I know not by which road I shall be taken." He completed the whole Koran, then he recited seventy verses of the Sura of the Cow. The second agony seized him. "Say Allah," they prompted him. "I have not forgotten," he replied. He grasped the rosary until four of his fingers were crooked about it, and one let it go. "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate," he cried. And he closed his eyes and yielded up the ghost. When the time for washing his body came, the one performing the rite wished to bathe his eyes in water. A voice cried from Heaven, "Withhold your hand from the eyes of My friend. His eyes were closed upon My Name, and shall not be opened save at the meeting with Me." He then tried to open Jonaid's fingers. The voice cried, "The finger that has been crooked upon My Name shall not be opened save by My command." When they lifted up his body on the bier, a white dove perched upon a corner of the bier. For all that they sought to drive it away, it would not go. At last the dove cried, "Trouble not yourselves and me. My claws have been

fastened to the corner of the bier by the nail of Love. That is why I am perched here. Do trouble yourselves; today his body passes to the care of the cherubim. Were it not for your clamour, his body would have flown with us in the sky like a white falcon. (**Translated by A.J.Arberry**)

11.Abu Ishaque Garzoni

He was known as a Cardinal Pole of the world (highest cadre in spiritual pivot) of pious persons. He was famous Sufi saint for the following things.1.Tariqat (the Mystic way of life).2.Shariat (Islamic law). It is difficult and it is also not possible to cover about his greatness and his character details in the writing. He was perfect in the following things.1.The commandments of Allah. 2.The Sunnah (Practice of holy prophet) of the last prophet of Allah. For the above reason his mausoleum is well known as best solution for the fulfilling of desires because those who will pray there for their wishes for the sake of his name then their desires will be accepted soon by the grace of Allah. His grand father was a fire worshiper but his

parents were Muslims. It is well known fact that when he was born in the house and in that night one pillar of light was seen which was linked from earth to sky and in that pillar there were many branches were there and also there were many lights from such branches. In the childhood his parents wanted to send him to the school but his grandfather instructed his son to teach him some occupation instead of sending the school so that he should learn some occupation and earn money so that his parents may get rid of the poverty. But he was not interested in other occupations and he was insisted for the school education to learn the holy Quran so for this reason he was allowed in this matter and asked to go school to learn from one teacher. He was much interested in the school education so he will used to reach the school daily first from other students and no other pupil could not come before him.

He used to complete his daily lessons first from other students. So he was become first rank and best student in the school. He soon became perfect in many knowledges, arts and other studies. He used to tell that one who will approaches Allah in his youth period

then in such condition Allah will enlighten his innermost and due to His mercy there will be stream of wisdom which will flows from his tongue and one who will spend his childhood and youth period in the disobedience of Allah and if he will approaches Allah in the old age and even though he will be called the sincere person but he will not get the fulfilment of his wisdom. He told when he was used to busy in the school education in the childhood and from that period he got interest towards the way of Mysticism and at that time the following holy saints were very famous and well known 1.Abdullah Khafif.2.Haris Mahasibi.3 Omer bin Ali.

So he prayed Allah and after the prayer of Istaqara (prayer for dream serving as augury) and in the prostration he requested Allah to guide him to take education from one of the above great teachers. After this prayer he slept in the prostration and in his dream he saw a pious person who came over there with lot of books on the camel and he told all these books are belongs to Abdullah Khafif and he sent all these books and this camel for him. So for this reason he came to know that he would become the disciple of Abdullah Khafif. After that sheikh Ikar come

to see him and he was given him many books of Abdullah Khafif. Upon these events he was understood well that he should start his worship as per the style of Abdulah Khafif. Once his parents told him that as he was adopted the Darweshi system but due to his poverty he is unable for the hospitality of others who will visit him as his guests. As the speciality of Mysticism is hospitality and may this defect will caused him to leave soon the Darweshi from him. Upon hearing the above remarks from his parents he could not say anything to them but he was silent in this matter.

During the month of Ramazan by chance one group of travelers visited his place and stayed with him. At that time there was nothing in the house for providing to the travellers. But at that time one person was brought two bags of breads and many kinds of food items were also with that person and who presented all these items to him with great respect and honour. When this event was known to his parents then they were regretted for their wrong thinking about him and his Mysticism .Then they told him to continue his service for the creations of Allah and for this reason Allah will continue to help

him for the success in this matter. After that day they did not interfere in his matters.

Once he was planned to construct a mosque and then he saw the prophet in his dream that he was laying the foundation stone of the mosque building by his holy hands. Upon his wake up of the dream he laid the foundation of the mosque building on the same place where the prophet laid the foundation in his dream. He constructed a big mosque in which there were three rows of the prayer carpets were available .

One he saw the prophet in his dream that he was making extensions of the mosque building along with his holy companions. So he extended the mosque building as per its size and dimensions which he saw in the dream.

When he decided to visit holy Makkah for the Hajj pilgrimage then the learned persons of Basra invited him for the dinner in which there many kinds of dishes of food and breads were available there. But he did not touch the mutton so the learned persons thought that he did not eat the mutton . So

he understood their thinking and told them that as you all are thinking that he do not eat the mutton but it is not right. But from that day onwards to keep their thinking right he never eat the mutton and till his life he never touched the mutton and acted upon what he told at the Basra dinner. And in other event he promised that he will never eat sugar and dates and so he kept his words till his death . Once during his illness the doctor advised him to eat some sugar but he did not followed his instructions.

The Zorasterian ruler of Gazron constructed a canal for the public purpose there and for the sake of piety he did not used its water.

He used to instruct always his disciples not to eat without the presence of the guests . Once his disciple asked his permission to leave him to see his relative at some other place and upon reaching there he ate with his relative without the presence of the guests and left that place and on the way there was his fighting with another Darwesh person and that indigent person framed the

charges against him and such charges were proved correct and for this reason that Darwesh was taken his dress and made him naked without dress. So upon this event he told the persons that those who eat the food without the presence of guests will face such grave consequences so that person repented in this matter and never ate without the presence of guests.

As per his Asceticism and piousness he never touched the illegal food provisions and he always used the dress from the legal earnings and due to this reason his dress was always very low in the quality . He adopted the occupation of agriculture to maintain his members of the family. In his beginning period his poverty was too much so he used to eat too much grass in place of the food provisions and in this way he used to finish his hunger. Due to his too much eating of grass there was green colour which was visible on his body. He used to make his dress from the old pieces of cloth to cover his body. He was passed away from the world on 8th Zequada on the Sunday in the year 446 A.H. at the age of 72 or 73 years .

Once in his gathering one learned person from Khurasan was present there and due to his effective speech there was great condition of intuition on the gathering. At that time that sheikh of Khurasan thought in his mind that his knowledge is more than him. But such popularity and fame which is not available to him despite of his mastery on many kinds of knowledges. At the same time due to his innermost quality he was come to know his thinking and he continued his speech and he told about the oil of lantern and the water which are talking together . The water told that Allah was given him power on all things because if he was not come into existence then the creations would have been died of thirst. So you could not get such position like him. But despite of this you are competing with him which is wrong and not correct.

The oil replied him that he is having humble nature and but you are having nature of proud and show. Because first my seed was sowed in the earth and upon the development of plant the seeds of the plant were broken and put into the oil-expeller to

take oil from there. While burning himself he brought the light into the world and he was ignored all the difficulties and troubles which were given to him in this matter. And by saying the above details he finished his speech . So that learned person of Khurasan was understood his meaning clearly and beg his pardon while touching his feet.

He used to say that once an idea come into his mind that he should not collect alms from the others and to spend these collection of amounts upon the charity of the indigent persons and due to this charity work there may be any mistake by him and for this mistake he will be responsible on the day of judgement before Allah. Due to this thinking he told all the indigent persons to leave him and go back to their places and continue their worship there. But in the same night he saw the holy prophet in his dream and who told him that he should not to be worried in his dealings of the charity for the indigent persons.

Once during his preaching time two persons came over there with their intention to

request him for his prayer for the success in the world for the pleasure and comfort . But just looking at them he told the persons that they should visit him for the sake of Allah only and the persons who will came over there with intention of the demand of this world should not visit him and for this matter they will not get any reward in this matter.

Once he was told in the preaching that he declared by swearing that he is acting upon all Amar and Nahi of Allah (commandments and prohibitions of Allah) completely. At that time Qazi (judge) Taher was present there in that gathering and who thought that not to marry is against the commandment of Allah. As he was not married so how he can say that his is acting upon all the commandments of Allah. So how his claim will be right ?. At that time he told by addressing him that Allah granted his permission in this matter. And he told when he used to worship in the jungle by saying Subhana Rabi Aala (Glory be to my great Sustainer) in prostration then all particles used to continue Tasbe (glorification of god) with him.

Once one Jew visited him and told him he is Muslim and stayed with him as his guest in the house for some period of time. Due to his fear of disclosing his religion he hid himself behind the pillar of the house but daily he used to provide him food provisions regularly. After stay of some days with him he was asked his permission to leave his place so he told him "Oh : Jew did you not liked the place . " So that man asked him how did he come to know that he is Jew person and despite of this fact why he was treated him as a kind guest of honour in his house. He told him that in the world Allah provides provisions to Muslim and non-believers without discrimination and difference at all.

Once the minister's friend Mir Abu Fazal who was drunkard person was visited his house so at that time he told him to give up his habit of drinking of wine . He told him that he would gave up this habit but due to his presence at the minister's palace where the wine is served freely so it is compulsory there to have wine in the group of the minister. Then he told him at the palace

when the persons force him to drink wine so at that time he should remember him. So for this reason he was repented in this matter and left his house and reached his residence and saw all glasses of wine were broken into pieces and the wine was flowing on the earth. He was surprised to see his great miracle and upon asking by the minister he was told him the details about the above miracle to him. So for this reason the minister did not ask him to have wine in his court with the other courtiers.

Once one person visited his house along with his son and was repented so for this reason he told him that those who will visit him for the repentance and if they will be away from the repentance then in such case such persons will face the grave consequences upon leaving the repentance . But despite of his clear warning the two persons broken their promise and for this reason both were died in the fire accident.

Once one bird came and sat on his hand so he was told that he is not afraid of him. Once one deer came near to him and stand near to

him so he put his hand on him back with kindness and he told that he came over there to visit him and asked his servant to take deer back to the jungle and in this way the deer reached back his place .

Once he told that he was surprised upon such persons who will colour their neat and legal dress with illegal blue colour and at that time he was wearing blue colour coverlet which was sent to him from Kirman. He told one who will not check in the matter of his food provisions is like an animal. He told to leave the world and continue the remembrance of Allah. He told the light of Allah is a source for the discernment because the light and life after death are both related with the invisible and the observation of invisible is possible with help invisible only.

He told for the pious person the lowest punishment for him to take away the sweetness of remembrance of Allah. He told the persons of world see the belief of manifest and will declare some person as bad but Allah will look the person's

innermost defects and will declare him such person as bad .He told by leaving all things in the world we should approach towards Allah because in both the worlds without Allah's obedience there is no success and comfort .

He told in Garzon city now there are few Muslims persons are there and there are many fire worshippers are there but one time will come then there will be many Muslims in this place and few fire worshippers will be there.

After his saying twenty four thousand fire worshippers accepted the religion of Islam due to his propagation and endeavours. He told it is matter of courage that one person who will take something then he should give the same to others and half dead is such person who will not take something and but he will give something. Such person is bad one who will not take something and will not give something. He told he saw a dream in which there was a ladder which was hanging from the sky to his mosque and there were many persons who were reaching from his

mosque to the sky through that ladder. And He (Allah) granted greatness to his mosque and those who will visit it then they will get their goals of both worlds.

He told one who will have patience on the problems of this world then he will become successful in the another world. He told if you want to become similar as persons who were passed from the world then to become at least their friend if you could not become similar to them. He told Allah granted favour to the mankind and due to His favour the pleasure of hymns was granted by Allah to them. In the similar manner Allah granted love of something to all mankind. But for him Allah granted His love. He told every Muslim should wake up in the night and to pray four Rakats (one set of standing , genuflexion and prostration in prayers) upon ablution and if it is not possible then he should pray two Rakats (one set of standing , genuflexion and prostration in prayers) and also if it is not possible then he would recite Islamic creed (there is no god except Allah).

Once some persons caught the tiger and were passing with the tiger from his shrine so he asked the tiger what mistake he did so these persons caught him and taking away. He told the persons that they should not have confidence upon their conduct because every where there is trap of Satan is ready for them. So for this reason many persons who follow the Mystic way of life are fallen in the trap of the Satan. At the time of this preaching his style was so much effective and impressive on the gathering and for this reason its effect was so great on the persons for some time .

He told "Oh : Allah if you think me eligible for the salvation then along with me also grant salvation of all my friends so that we all should live in happiness there. And if I am not deserved for Your favour then send me to the hell in a such way that nobody could not see me there and for this reason my enemies may not be pleased in this matter. "

He told one who is not having control on his feelings of sex then he should marry soon so

that he could control this problem smoothly . And for him if there is no difference of wall and women then he would have marry some women. But his condition is similar to that person who is drowning into the river water and for him there is no escape from there. He told that person is most unlucky at the time of death and if one who will not have the love of Allah and also for this reason he did not get the pleasure of hymns of Allah . He told that person is most luckiest person one who will get the love of Allah and also he will get the pleasure of hymns in his life and in such condition he will left the world. He told the property and goods of such person who will revolt against the king will be ceased by the royal policemen. So in the same way the religion of such persons who are against the pious persons will be destroyed by Allah. He told why the man should not be afraid because on one side there is soul and Satan is there on another side and there is Sultan (King) in between them so the man is there who is helpless and incapable .

He told to keep away from the persons of flatterer because due to such persons there will be possibility of occurrence of problems and difficulties. He told for the person one who will open their bags of money on the path of Allah and for such person Allah will widen the door of the heaven and on His (Allah) way those who will follow the miserliness then for such persons the door of heaven will be closed by Allah. He told Allah sends punishment for the general persons and displeasure for his special persons and till the displeasure will be there then the love of Allah will also be available with them. He told we should not go empty hands before the following four persons.

1. The Family members.
2. The Patients.
3. The Sufi persons.
4. The Kings.

He used to tell the persons who want to adopt the Mystic way of life of indigence and Sufism are very difficult and tough works because in this work first one should have to face starvation and thirst as well as disgrace in this matter. The persons used to

call them beggars to the Sufi and Darwesh persons. So one who is ready for all such above things then he should adopt the mystic way of life otherwise ignore his decision in this respect and in the best possible manner he should busy in the remembrance of Allah and this type of worship is enough for him. He told one should be careful while doing bad deeds to anybody because if you do such thing to any person then Allah will appoint one person for such person and who will continue to take revenge in this matter as per the saying in holy Quran and its meaning is as follows.

"If you do good deed for other person then it is good deed you do indeed for yourself and if you do bad deed to any person then it is actually the bad deed you did to yourself only." He told there is wine in the treasure of Allah from which He (Allah) will provide it to the pious persons daily in the morning time to them so that they (pious) will be free from the desire of food and other provisions. He told the lover of Allah will never become the lover of the world.

Once he was going somewhere and on the way many old persons and children gathered there to visit him. When the persons asked him how the children come to know his status and position and he replied them that they know him well because when they will sleep during the nights then he will stand and pray Allah for their welfare and benefits .

He used to tell that the end of endeavours is that when we should hand over our efforts and endeavours to One (Allah) who is free from all efforts and endeavours. Its meaning is that we should hand over all our affairs to Allah. Once the persons asked him if the king or minister want to give him something from their legal source then he would accept such offer or not ? . He replied them that he will not accept the offer because these persons have ignored their expedience and those who will leave their expedience and for this mistake they are eligible for disgrace in the world so for this reason he would not consider to accept anything from them.

He told to get the knowledge of Shariah (Islamic law) is must for every minute because for the persons of Mysticism and Haqiqat (truth) there is no exemption of the knowledge . When you will acquired the knowledge then to keep away from the show and do not keep secret of your knowledge from the creations and by acting upon your knowledge you should continue your search for the willingness of Haq (truth). Because the example of that learned person who will not act upon the knowledge is same as the soulless body of the person.

He told do not earn the world with the help of your knowledge because as per the saying of the holy prophet “ It will bring disgrace by giving preference to the world than the deeds of the another world and such person's name will be added in the list of persons who will deserve for the hell.” And he told it will be also remembered that those who will demand the another world from the affairs of this world and for this reason they will not get anything in the another world.” He told to seek legal the provisions upon getting knowledge and there is no better

thing than this thing because those who will not demand the legal provisions then their prayers and deeds are not accepted by Allah. He told if you act upon all the above things then reserve all your life for the service of creations.

At the time of his death he told his disciples that he is going to leave this world soon so he want to advise them to the following things so they should hear and act upon them.

1. To obey his successor.
2. To read Quran in the morning time.
3. To look after the travelers.
4. To live with love and cooperation with all.

During his life time he entered the names of all his disciples and admirers in one register and in his last advise he told them to keep that register in the grave with him and so upon his death the register was also kept in his grave.

Some persons saw him in their dream and asked him how Allah treated him .? He told Allah did small favour for me upon my

death and He (Allah) accepted the salvation of all his disciples whose names were written in his register. He used to pray Allah to accept the wishes and desires of persons who will used to visit him for the fulfilment of their wishes and desires.

(Translated by Mohammed Abdul Hafeez)

12.Shaik Alauddin Tousi

Shaikh Alauddin Tousi was as asylum and abode of the mystics and innermost and persons . He was the head of the Sufi chain of Tousan.

Family details: In Tousi, his family has ownership, riches, and status.

He used to be in search of a Shaikh and Alauddin Tousi, who was an antecedent of holy persons and innermost people. He was the head of the Sufi chain of Tousan.

Family details: In Tousi, his family has ownership, riches, and status. He was among nobles of Touse.

Pledge and caliphate : He was used to being in search of a peer. Once he was sitting with Njamuddin Kubra, and he was talking with him, and both of them were searching for Peer. Both have decided to go in the presence of Hazrat Shaikh Abu Najibuddin Suharwardi. And consult him where to have a pledge on the hand of the right-guided person in this matter.

So both of them went in the presence of Hazrat Shaikh Abu Najibuddin Suharwardi. And told him that life is ending, but the aim is still not found by us. Upon hearing this, he himself said that he was trying to solve this matter. I do not have the key to achievement with me. Yes, the achievement of the aim is possible at this time when we will have entered the circle of the devotion of the old holy person of Allah in this matter.

Hazrat Shaikh Abu Najibuddin Suharwardi told them that at present there is no better holy person than Shaikh Wajihuddin Abu Hafaz. He is Darwesh, as well as a holy person of Allah and afflicted also. So we have

to go in his presence. And by entering into his circle of devotion, we can go and benefit from his favor and blessing.

He and Shaikh Najamuddin Kubra were in agreement with the advice of Hazrat Shaikh Abu Najibuddin Suharwardi in this matter. They accompanied him and were reached in the presence of the blessing of Shaikh Wajihuddin Abu Hafaz. And requested to accept pledge at his hands.

He accepted the request of Shaikh Alauddin Tousi and Shaikh Abu Najibuddin Suharwardi, but he surrendered Shaikh Najamuddin Kubra to Shaikh Abu Najibuddin Suharwardi and told him to give teaching and training and guide him in this matter.

Shaikh Wajihuddin Abul Hafz bin Umar bin Umaya was given education and teaching to Shaik Alauddin Tousin and Shaikh Abu Najib Suharwardi and was given their saintly dress.

The advice of the spiritual master: After giving saintly dress, Shaikh Wajihuddin Abul Hafz bin Umar bin Umaya was advised Shaikh Alauddin Tousi and Shaikh Abu Najib

Suharwardi to go back to their native place and engage in guidance in the right way.

Stay in Touse: As per the advice of his spiritual master, Shaikh Alauddin Tousi, came back to his native place, Touse. And sat on the seat of instruction. He was in Touse till the end of his life and engaged in the work of guidance to mankind. As well as helping them in this matter. He engaged in the work of education, teaching, and guidance in the right way.

Special features of the Tousi Sufi chain : This Sufi chain, which was started by him, is called Tousi. And those who have entered into his circle of devotion are Tousan. The Sufi chain of Tousi ended up in six chains on Junaid Baghdadi. Those who have connected with the Sufi chain of the Tousi did not keep away from the Sama meetings. And who will hear it.



And use Mazamir (In Arabic music, a mizmār (Arabic: مَزَامِير plural مَزَامِير mazāmīr) is any single or double reed wind instrument. In Egypt, the term Mizmar usually refers to the conical shawm that called zurna in Turkey and Armenia.). They used to engaged in dancing and ecstasy. As well as engaged much in remembrance of Jali (recital of the praise and names of God loudly).They used to eat whatever they get from each and every side without any objection in this matter.

For Muslims and as well as infidels, fakir and poor, rich and poor. They used to distribute to all equally without any discrimination. And used to engage in mystical exercise and endeavours very much. And used to meet each and everybody with cheerfulness.

They were famous for hospitality. The guest may be Muslim or Non-Muslim but they treat all of them with much respect and honour. They will not leave any particle for the hospitality of the guests.

Character :He was perfect in the education and training of the disciples. He was unique in worship and mystical exercise of the time. And in generosity and liberality and kindness in which he was unique in the time. In trust, content and tolerance and patience and thanks he was a like a statue.

He was learned person of actions, holy person of Allah. In Islamic law, mystic way, reality as well as he was well known for the secrets of knowledge of God.

Recital and narration :He used to engage in remembrance of Jali very much .(Recital of the praise and names of God loudly)

(Translated by Mohammed Abdul Hafeez)

13. Hazrat Ziauddin Abu Najib Abul Qaher Suharwardi

Hazrat Ziauddin Abu Najib Abul Qaher Suharwardi was a perfect holy person of Allah as well as the Qutub (Qutb, Qutub, Kutb, Kutub or Kotb (Arabic: قطب) means 'axis', 'pivot' or 'pole'. Qutb can refer to celestial movements and be used as an astronomical term or a spiritual symbol.) and leader of learned persons. And ascetic of the sun enjoys the company of the beloved persons. He was the head of the Suharwardi Sufi chain.

Family details: His genealogical record was connected with 12 chains with Hazrat Abu Baker Sddiq.

Birth: He was born in the year 490 Hijri.

Name: His name was Abdul Qaher.

Surname: His surname was Abu Najib.

Title: His title was known as Ziauddin.

Education and training: He obtained perfection in Hadith (sayings of the prophet) Fiqah (Islamic jurisprudence), Tafsir

(exegesis of the Quran) Mantaq (argument) and philosophy.

He has perfection in the knowledge of the Arabic language. He was reached to Baghdad from his native place Suharward in search of knowledge. He got an education at the Nizamia school in Baghdad.

Pledge and caliphate: He has a connection of devotion with Shaikh Ahmed Ghazli and his uncle, Shaikh Wajihuddin. Shaikh Ahmed Ghazli and Shaikh Wajih Uddin Abu Hafaz were given the saintly dress to him.

Worship and mystical exercises: Ten years before his pledge, he had spent much of his time in worship and physical exercises. Upon his pledge, he spent 30 years in worship, mystical exercise, and endeavors. As such, he left his comfort and rest. And his night sleep schedule. And adopted indigence and hunger. And made his hobby of remembrance of Allah . He used to drink water every three days. He used to eat three dates only. He did not sleep for 30 years. In the night and daytime, he used to sit in the direction of the Kaaba in Makkah.

Travel and tour: He visited a large number of countries. He stayed in many villages as well as many cities. He was met by many Darwesh people. He was blessed in the company of Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Quader Jilani.

There is an event of his travel to Syria that is stated by his disciple and caliph, Shaikh Shuhabuddin Umar Suharwardi as follows.

"And I have seen Shaikh Najib Ziauddin about him during his journey to Syria and some people of the world have sent them food on the head of the foreign prisoners and they were in their prison. When there was spread of the eating cloth and prisoners waiting there to take back empty dishes. He told them to bring prisoners in his presence so that they could sit and eat with Darwesh persons. The servant brought them and sat them in one row. Upon this, the shaikh stood and upon walking slowly, he went near there and sat in the middle of them, as if he was among them. After this he ate, and they also ate the food there.

Death: He left the mortal world on 12 Jamadil Awwal Sunday in the year 563 Hijri.

Disciples and caliphs: Shaikh Ammar Yassir, Shaikh Rind Bhan, and Shaikh Ismail Qasri were his famous and well-known disciples. Shaikh Shuhabuddin Umar Suharwardi was his famous and well-known caliph. And who was given much progress to this Sufi chain. It is said that he was given saintly dress by him to Shaikh Najamuddin Kubra.

The special features of his Sufi chain

Hospitality, generosity, kindness, and salavatio are the special features of the Sufi chain of Suharwardi. The holy persons of this family were followed the following principle.

4. Khilwat dar anjuman (or khalwat dar anjuman) — *retirement in company*

Developing the ability to detach from and distance oneself from external noise, disturbance, and confusion when in company and remain tranquil, perhaps with the aid of a zikr, an exercise in remembrance of God.

Also being able to reattach one's attention to the outward when necessary. Though outwardly the Sufi is in the world, inwardly he or she is with God.

They have a relationship with the people to have relations with kings, ministers, and noble persons who did not think against the progress of spiritualism. They used to provide food to the poor and indigent persons. They used to like to live in the habitations. They were punctual for remembrance of Allah and thinking.

As per Dast Bakar, Dil bayar.

(Hands on the job, but heart with the Beloved.). They were lovers of knowledge and gave much respect to the learned people.

Character: He was perfect in all knowledge. He thinks tourism and travel are making Sufi people pure in this matter. He was unique in the following ways.

Patience. Firmness, tolerance, trust in Allah, selflessness, generosity, worship, and mystical exercise and endeavors. When he will eat

something, then eat with much peace and satisfaction, and used to say, "I am eating food and praying."

Upon its explanation, his caliph, Shaikh Shuhabuddin Umar Suharwardi, who said as follows.

"From this, there is a sign in this matter that full attention and usually he used to leave those engagements at the time of eating. So that his courage and intention may not separate in this matter. And in eating, he used to think much of the effect of full attention of heart and remembrance of Allah. And he would care there will be not dropped with him in this matter. At the time of eating, he used to think about the things that Allah had provided. And engage in the remembrance of Allah."

Fondness of knowledge: He was a great author of his time. His famous and well-known book, '**Adab Muridin**', is a great book on Sufism.

Sayings: He said such is his son who will follow his way and by my guidance to come on the right way.

Revelation and miracles: One day he was passing through the bazaar in Baghdad along with his devotees and by chance, they passed by the shop of the butcher, and he stayed at that shop and told to butcher "This goat to tell if she is not dead or not killed." When it was heard by the butcher, he was in a surprised condition. When he had come back in normal form, then the butcher told him that "Yes, whatever he said was right in this matter".

(Translated by Mohammed Abdul Hafeez)

14. Shaikh Najamuddin Kubra

Shaikj Najamuddin Kubra is the son of the Fakir people. And the moon of persons of piety. And teacher of the mystic way as well as the crown of the holy persons.

He was the head of the Sufi chain of Firdousian.

His family was not available for any name, fame, and greatness, as well as any special

status. Or any claim of asceticism or piety or fame or knowledge and art. His relatives were residing in Ray.

Father: His father's name is Umar. He is called Umar al-Januti.

Birth: He was born in Ray in the year 540 Hijri; it is also said that he was born in Kharizm.

Name: His name is Ahmed bin Umar.

Surname: He got his surname 'Abuljanab' in a dream by the prophet of Allah. Upon returning from Alexandria, he was blessed with a visit from the prophet. And he was requested to grant him a surname, which was accepted by the prophet. He was given his surname in this matter. He was asked by the prophet whether his surname is Muqafa. (hidden)

The prophet told him it was Mutsadda (blocked). Upon thinking about hidden details about his surname, he was able to remember his surname. And he was able to know in this matter that there were special changes in him.

Titles: He is called by the titles of Najamuddin Kubra and Shaikh Wali Tarash. He was called Kubra because in his youth he was engaged in obtaining knowledge.

He will get overpowered upon his discussion and conversation with any person. So for this reason, people called him 'Tamata Kubra'. Due to much use of 'Tamata Kubra', he had half a title removed from his title, and he became famous by the name of Kubra. The meaning of his title, Wali Tarash, is that when he looks at any person, then he will get saintliness in this matter.

Education and training: Upon getting primary education, he went to Tabrez. He began studying the book of 'Sharah al-Sana' with the disciple of Mohiuddin. Still, some portion of the book was left, and the book was discontinued in his study. He was reached by Hamdan and obtained a certificate in Hadith (sayings of the prophet) and went to Alexandria and was met there by one holy person who had with him a higher certificate of Hadith. And from him also he has obtained a certificate in this matter.

For a state to completely change: When the prophet was given his surname, then from that time there came changes in his life. He wants to live separate from the world. He followed the method of solitude and giving up. Then he began his search of reality with the edge of the shirt.

From this there was one event that had much effect upon him. He used to take lessons from the book 'Sharah Al-Sana' from one of the disciples of Mohiuddin in Tabrez. He was seen on a Darwesh there. Upon seeing him, he had become restless with him. He asked what was the name of the darwesh. People told him he was a majzub (a dauntless person), and he was called Baba Farah Tabrazi.

He was restless for the whole night to meet Baba Farah Tabrizi. When it was morning, he went in the presence of his spiritual master. He requested him to accompany him to meet Baba Farah Tabrizi. His teacher accepted his request. He was reached in the shrine building of Baba Farah Tabrazi along with his friends. There was one servant, and his name was Shadan. And who went inside, and he

brought a message from Baba Farah Tabrazi. That if they can enter the court of Allah, then they can enter inside, and he tells them. About the message of Baba Farah Tabrazi. He said that "When I was able to know the look of Baba Farah Tabrazi, then I was able to know the meaning of his message. Whatever was hidden, which was manifested, and I put my hands on my chest.

In short, he and his teacher and friends have reached the presence of Baba Farah Tabrazi. And all were sat before him with respect. After some time, there came changes in the condition of Baba Farah Tabrazi. There was prevailed on his face a condition of greatness and magnificence, and his face began shining like the sun of the sky. The dress that he was wearing was torn off. When he came back in his previous condition, then he wore his dress for him.

He told, "My condition had changed, and the things of the unrelated were no more and left."

Upon returning from Baba Farah Tabrazi, his teacher advised him to complete a portion of the book 'Sharah al-Sana,' which was left by

him. He can do whatever he likes after reading the book in this matter.

He agreed with the advice of the teacher when he went for taking lessons. What he has seen is that Baba Farah Tabrazi came there, and he told him. He was able to understand the indication in this matter. And this sign was enough for him. He was left at the school. And left thinking about the lessons. And adopted loneliness. He was engaged in the mystical exercises and endeavors. After some time there was revelation for him, and Elim Ladini (inspired knowledge) and happenings of the Invisible. Now there came into his mind the idea that writing was a revelation of what was to come, that there was a him. So he began writing the revelation in this matter. Then, at Baba Farah Tabrazi's door, he was advised and told that "Satan advised him of confusion, so do not write the revelation in this matter." Upon his advice, he was thrown a pen and inkpot. And by removing all thoughts from his heart, he was engaged in the remembrance of Allah. And went on the journey in search of the reality:

Search for the reality: He reached Hamdan from Tebreality; from Hamdan we reached Alexandria. Upon reaching Khurasan, he became ill there. He spent some days in Khuariztan in a helpless condition. There was no arrangement of a good place to stay there. When he was able to know that there is shrine building of Ismail Qasri there. Then he went there, where he was much welcomed. He was staying in the shrine building. There was a practice of Sama meeting in the shrine, and from which there will be difficulty to him as he was opposed to the Sama hearing.

One day there was a progress of the Sama meeting in the shrine. Shaikh Ismail came to him from the hot condition of the Sama meeting. From there he was asked whether he wanted to stand. He was told, "Yes, he wanted to stand."

Upon hearing this, Shaikh Ismail Qasri held his hand and shook hands and took him to the meeting place of Sama. He was given a whirl to him with the support of the wall. When he and sat came back in his previous condition, he felt that he had become completely healthy and strong. There was no finding of

the illness there in him. Due to this event, there was a find in him of devotion for this reason. He lived there for a long period of time.

One night, it came to his mind that he knew knowledge of manifest, but Shaikh Ismail had more knowledge in his innermost thoughts than him.

When it was morning time, Shaikh Ismail Qasri called for him in his presence and asked him to go in the presence of Shaikh Yasir. As per his order, Shaikh went in the presence of Shaikh Yasir.

He was in the presence of Shaikh Yasir for a long period of time. One night came the same thought in his heart as above. In the morning, Shaikh Yasir gave him an order to go in the presence of Hazrat Roz Bahan in Egypt. And he told him that "To this person he will set right in his one slap in this matter."

So he went to Egypt, where he reached the shrine building, the building of Egypt, and Ahan. He could not find him there. He was seen with people in meditation there. He was asked if one of them was Shaikh Roz Bahan ?.

One person told him that Shaikh Roz Bahan was doing ablution outside. He went and saw that Shaikh Roz Bahan was doing ablution with some little water there. Upon seeing this, a thought came to his heart that how he would be a shaikh in this matter.? He thought that with little water there was not allowed ablution.

Hazrat Roz Bahan, upon doing ablution, spread water on his face. Upon falling, water he was found condition of the unconscious upon him. Upon doing ablution, Shaikh Roz Bahan came to the shrine and performed two rakats of prayers of thanks of ablution (Tahiyyatul wadu is two rakats of nafl offered on performing wazu). This is if you're not intending anything else, like reading the Quran or other namaz.) He was standing there to say salam to him after finishing the prayer by him. By standing there, there was a prevailing condition of ecstasy upon him, and he was seen that he was seen in the dream world that judgment came and the door of hell is open there and people are putting in it. On the way to hell, there is an embankment, and on it there is sitting one person. And he is putting the persons in the

hell. He is leaving the person who says that he was in connection with Hazrat Roz Baham, and then he is leaving such persons. When his turn came, upon saying his connection with Hazrat Roz Baham, he was left from there. Then he went toward another embankment, and upon it was the seat where Hazrat Roz Baham was sitting. He fell upon his foot. Then he was struck upon the nape of the neck. And he was fallen on earth. He told him to be careful in this matter and not think bad thoughts about persons of reality."

He had fallen to the earth, and there was no such condition upon him. He came back in normal condition, and he saw that Hazrat Rozan Bahman was finishing his prayer. He went near him and put his head in his foot. Hazrat Roz Bahman has struck on the nape of the neck, and he repeated the same words there, and due to the slap and such words, there was no more illness of his innermost in this matter.

Hazrat Roz Bahman was given an order to go back in the presence of Shaikh Yasir. He wrote one letter to him with the following subject: "Whatever you have copper with you,

send to me so that it is converted to gold and will be sent back to you."

Upon order of Hazrat Roz Bahman, he left from there and reached in the presence of Shaikh Yasir. He had lived in his presence for a long period of time. And he was benefitted by his favors and blessings. At last, Shaikh Yasir was given him the order to go to Kharizam. He told him that people of that place are cruel. And used to refuse the mystic way, reality, and knowledge of the God. Shaikh Yasir told him not to care about the people. There is no matter of worry and concern in this matter. So he was reached by Kharizam and started the work of guidance in the right way.

Pledge and caliphate: He has a connection with two sides of the devotion. One is from Shaikh Yasir and reaches Shaikh Abul Qasim Gorgani. And from Shaikh Ismail Qasri to Mohammed Na Nankil. And from him to Mohammed bin Daud and from Abul Abbas Idris. And from him to Abul Qasim bin Ramdan. And from him to Yakub Tabri. And from him to Abu Abdulla Usman. And from him to Abu Yakub Naharjuri. And from him to

Abu Yakub Sosi. From him to Abdul Wahid bin Zaid. From him to Hazrat Kamil bin Ziyad. And from him to Imam Auliya Hazrat Ali Ibn Taleb.

It is also said that he and Shaikh Ziauddin Abu Najib Suherwardi were disciples of one peer.

One day, Alauddin Tousi came in the presence of Shaikh Ziauddin Abu Najib Suherwardi and told him that a long period of life had passed away, but there was not done work. Upon hearing this, Shaikh Ziauddin Abu Najib Suherwardi told, "We are also involved in such a scar, and if you want to get an aim, then enter any circle of devotion.

He told "If there will be a chain, then pledge anywhere. Upon this, Shaikh Najibuddin Suhearwardi told us, "Yes, we are also not blessed with the devotion. In this city there is a confidant person. And who has comprehensive knowledge. And his name is Shaikh Wajihuddin Abu Hafz. Come on, we will be entering his devotion."

So three of them went in the presence of Shaikh Wajihuddin Abu Hafz. Shaikh

Wajihuddin accepted the pledge of Shaikh Abu Najib Suherwardi and Shaikh Alauddin Tousi. And was given saintly dress to them. He was advised to have both of them go to their native places and engage in the work for guidance of the mankind and help them and engage in guidance in the right way. But by holding the hand of Hazrat Najamuddin Kubra, he was handed over to Shaikh Abu Najib Suherwardi and said to him, "You take him; his work is your responsibility. So that there will be a fresh custom of the Darwesh system."

Shaikh Abu Najib Suherwardi, who kept with him for a period of seven months. And after that he was given the saintly dress to him and given him glad tidings that you are now among the saints of the Firdousia. Sufi chain.

From that day, the Sufi chain of Firdousia came into existence.

It is said that the grace that was got by Imam Ali Reza from Imam Musa Kazim and that grace of Imam Ali Reza, which he has kept with his last disciple as deposit. And who has given advice in this matter that it should be given to Najamuddin Kubra, who will be

appearing after the passing of some of the connections. Till that time, pass this thing of grace deposit to some others in this lineage so that this deposit will reach him in this matter.

Stay in Khwarizam: Khwarizam was his center of guidance till the last time of his life in Khwarizam. He was engaged in education and sermons as well as in worship and mystical exercises.

Prediction: Before the Tatari people's attack on Khwarizam, he was given a prediction of this disorder in this matter. He told them that there will be a fire arriving from the direction of the east. And it will be continued up to the area of the west by burning all the area. About this disorder and problem, battle and war, as well as killing and bloodshed's example, will be find with difficulty. He advised some of his disciples to leave Khwarizam as soon as possible. Among them are Shaikh Saduddin Tamvi and Shaikh Raziuddin Ali Lala.

His devotees and disciples have requested him to pray in this matter so that this

difficulty may be passed away peacefully. He told it is not possible to pass away this disorder in this matter because it is firm fate from the side of Allah. He was requested to go away from Khwarizam. He was replied, "There is no permission for him to go outside. I will be martyred here."

Martyrdom: Sultan Mohammed Khawazim Shah ran away from there. But the Tatari people were believing that he was still with them there in Khawarizm. When Tatari entered the city, then at that time he called his remaining disciples and was given orders to them and told, "Stand with the name of Allah; come on so that we can fight in the way of Allah."

Then he came to his house and was taken his saintly dress. And tightened his waist well. And took spear in his hand. And Stainly's dress was open before him. He was hiding stones in his armpit; he went there and there was a started battle. He was throwing stones at the Tatar soldiers. Till as such that all his stones were finished. Tartars were sending his arrows upon him. An arrow was touched to his chest, which he was removed from

there by him. But he could not survive in this matter.

He was martyred on 10th Jamadil Awwal in the year 618 Hijri. At that time, his age was more than 60 years. His holy tomb is there in khwarizam. It is also said that at the time of his martyrdom, he was holding one flag of the Tatari people, such tight that even 10 Tatari people tried very much in this matter, but they could not take it back from his hands. At last that flag was cut. In the poetry of Jalaluddin Rumi, this event is mentioned.

Circle of devotion: His circle of devotion was very large. The famous and well-known disciples are as follows.

1. Shaikh Mujduddin Baghdadi 2. Shaikh Saaduddin Hamdi 3. Baba Kamal Jundi 4. Shaikh Raziuddin Ali Lala 5. Shaikh Saifuddin Baharzi 6. Shaikh Najamuddin Razi 7. Shaikh Jamaluddin Keli

Some have mentioned Shaik Bahuddin, father of Moulana Jalaluddin Rumi, as his disciple in this matter.

Special features of this Sufi chain

There were two sections of his Sufi chain which are as follows.

- 1. Firdousia 2. Kibria and both of them used to participate in the Same meetings. And used to hear Mazamir (flutes and other musical instruments played by mouth, psalms, canticles, peasant). In the condition they used to dance in the meetings. And used to engage in the Zikar of Jali (recital of the praise and names of God loudly).
- Acceptance and agreement were their methods. Whatever will happen, either good or bad, will be accepted by them with happiness in this matter as per as follows.

ما صنع الله فهو الخير

He followed the above order of Allah strictly. He used to be engaged in worship, mystical exercise, and endeavors entirely. He did not like discrimination. He will not make a difference between Muslims and non-Muslims, as well as rich and poor people.

Whoever comes in his presence, he will meet with cheerfulness. He will eat the things that will be found from wherever. And in the food he will not like disputation in this matter.

Character: He was unique and leader in the world. As well as he was unique and incomparable in excellence. He was a learned person of actions. He was well known for his generosity and bravery. He was a rich person of contents and trust of Allah. He was statue of acceptance and agreement. He used to take much interest in the education and training of the disciples. He was indifferent from mankind. And he was famous for hospitality.

He used to engage entirely in worship, mystical exercise, remembrance, and thinking of Allah, as well as in endeavors.

Teachings : About his teachings are beneficial and its importance of his teachings in which it can not be refuse in this matter. His teachings are helpful for making a mirror of the soul of the human body as well as taking the human soul of the man to take the status of the clear of the mirror. It is very useful. And with him for the student's faith, piety, patience, leaving up, solitude, endeavors, bountiful and selflessness, bravery, knowledge and wisdom, manners, manners, solitude and giving up, and

entrusting is a must for him. He should be alert to face dangers.

Sayings

He used to say that

1. Soul is one enemy, so be careful from his fraud and deception, which is must.
2. Heart will be decorated by cleanliness, and by ill-will it will be bad.
3. The worldly riches and status are like provision for a journey and conveyance.
4. There is no riches than devotion, and good luck depends upon it.

Recital and daily round of prayer

Prominent remembrance of Allah is 'La Ilaha Illah'. And prominent prayer is 'Alhamadilla'.

Revelation and miracles

1. One day one merchant came in his shrine building. And at that time there was a condition of ecstasy upon him. When his look of chemical was fallen then that merchant was got position of the saintliness. He was

given permission and said goodbye to that merchant. And given an order to him to go to his native place and engage in guidance in the right way to work.

2. One day there was discussion of persons of Khaf. There came thinking in his disciple Shaikh Saaduddin Hamdi that whether there is such a person in the nation of the prophet Mohammed, his company can effect the dog. When he was able to know by his light of wisdom, then he stood suddenly and went to the door of the shrine building. And he was stood there. By that time one dog came there and stopped. And he began shaking his tail. When there was a fall, his look on the dog then, by gaining grace, he became surprised and unconscious. He went to the graveyard from the city. He used to touch his head on the earth. Wherever he will go, then 50 or 60 dogs will come and gather around him in the circle. At last that dog died in such condition. He was buried as per his order. The people have constructed one building upon his grave. In one the couplets of Jalaluddin Rumi, this event is mentioned in his poetry books.

(Translated by Mohammed Abdul Hafeez)

The End.

(By Mohammed Abdul Hafeez, Amazon Kindle author)